WAS GEORGE SHULTZ OUT OF IT? *JACOB HEILBRUNN*

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

Summer Meltdown Issue

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FRED BARNES

Can Clinton Govern?
The Editors

Immigrant Culture Wars
Michael Lind

Can Yeltsin Govern?
Anne McElvoy

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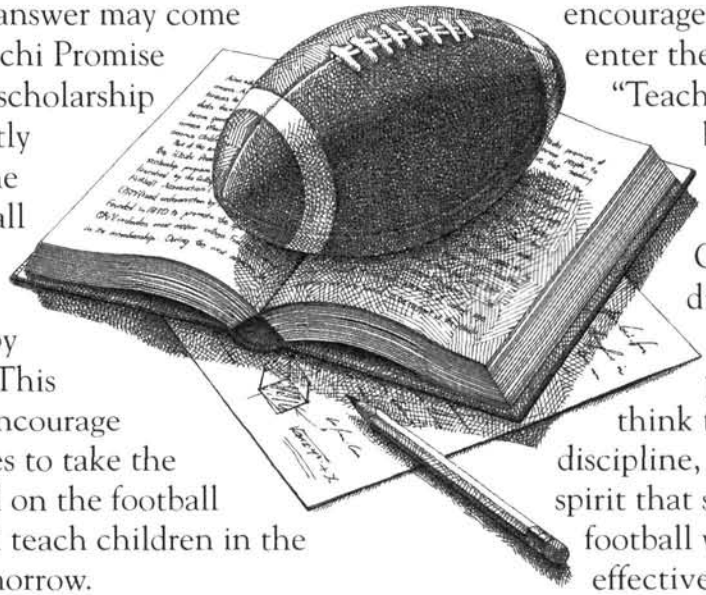
Turning Student Athletes Into Teachers

In the coming years, America's public school system must prepare to educate a new wave of students – the children of the baby boom generation. The U.S. Department of Education projects that from now until 2001, the demand for hiring public school teachers will increase by 18 percent. The question now arises: Who will teach the baby boomers' children?

Part of the answer may come from the "Hitachi Promise of Tomorrow" scholarship program recently launched by the College Football Association (CFA) and underwritten by Hitachi Ltd.. This program will encourage student athletes to take the lessons learned on the football field today and teach children in the classrooms tomorrow.



During the next academic year, the "Hitachi Promise of Tomorrow" program will award $335,000 in scholarships at the 67 CFA member universities. Eligible students include outstanding senior or graduate students who have participated in the college football program as a player, trainer, or manager. Each recipient will use his or her $5,000 grant to continue postgraduate studies in education or to meet certification requirements for pursuing a teaching career.

The CFA hopes that the "Hitachi Promise of Tomorrow" program will encourage more young people to enter the teaching profession. "Teaching plays an important but undervalued role in society today," explains Charles M. Neinas, the CFA's executive director. "We'd like to encourage students to pursue this field, and think that the leadership, discipline, hard work and team spirit that students gain in college football will help make them effective classroom teachers."

As college football fans and parents of school-age children, we at Hitachi are proud to be part of the scholarship program. We believe that it will go a long way toward instilling pride in education and the profession of teaching.

HITACHI

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Weekly Journal of Opinion

AUGUST 23 & 30, 1993

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ISSUES 4,101 & 4,102

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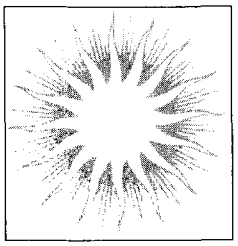

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CORRESPONDENCE

Total quality debate

To the editors:

Leon Wieseltier has a unified field theory, summed up in this sentence from his bitter critique of the Clinton communitarians ("Total Quality Meaning," July 19 & 26): "The individual is the true universal, the safe universal, the universal that has brought the least tragedy to history." He should tell that to mothers mourning for victims of America's gun-toting misanthropes. Or the millions of children who have been alternatively abused and abandoned by fathers who experience no pleasure save their own.

The point is not that emphasis on the individual leads inevitably to such exploitation, but that individualism unhinged from responsibility to others is every bit as dangerous as ideologies that exalt the interests of the state over individual rights. Any serious quest for a just society, or a good life, starts with a recognition that the values represented by rights and responsibilities are morally equal, yet always in tension. Finding the right balance involves a never-ending sequence of adjustments.

For a generation now, the idea that the "individual is the true universal" has been dominant with American cultural elites and political leaders from both parties. The result is that the values associated with mutual obligation, voluntary restraint and civic obligation are in sharp decline. In response, a broad movement—which includes New Paradigm Republicans, Clinton Democrats and terrified baby boomer parents—is rising, seeking ways to restore responsibility to its place in public policy, constitutional law and private life.

Wieseltier appears to be genuinely terrified by this development, alternately waving the bloody shirt of communism and the starched shirt of Organization Man. My advice to him is: "Calm down." The communitarians are pragmatic reformers, not counterrevolutionaries. There is no danger that they will turn America into a country of powerful Soviet bureaucracies and subservient Japanese-style workers. They are merely trying to restore something deeply American—a keen sense of responsibility for self and to others, which is essential if we are to make progress on the most important domestic issues facing this country.

ROGER L. CONNER
American Alliance for Rights & Responsibilities
Washington, D.C.

To the editors:

Leon Wieseltier was too dismissive of the communitarian impulse in the Clinton administration. It is true that communitarianism suffers from questionable premises and internal contradictions. But so do classic republicanism and liberal individualism, and most "isms."

Also, in his effort to belittle the communitarian impulse, Wieseltier embroiders, I am sure, his affection for individuation. By any historical or international comparison, contemporary America possesses the most individuated culture. That culture manifests itself in and is reinforced by a variety of institutions: cruelly unequal health care, similarly disparate schools, beggar-thy-neighbor and lift-the-drawbridge municipal arrangements, an everything's-for-sale gun market, a mass media without conscience or constraint, and so on. Surely, even in striving for that essential TNR tone of supercilious skepticism, Wieseltier does not mean to applaud those corollaries of individuation.

CLAUDE S. FISCHER
Berkeley, California

To the editors:

Having just completed a book on social engineering and American liberalism in the pre-World War II period, I read Leon Wieseltier's article with great interest. The linkage of managerialism to liberalism is not new, but the latest instance is perhaps the most frightening. The notion of social engineering derives in part from reformers' understandings of mechanical engineering in the Progressive era, and American management science arose from many of these same roots at about the same time. (Among the earliest theorists of government-as-control over the society-as-machine was THE NEW REPUBLIC's own Walter Lippmann, who as a young reporter interviewed, and was impressed by, Frederick Taylor.)

One managerial development Wieseltier might have mentioned involved the industrial psychologist Elton Mayo, who discovered that assembly-line employees responded well to the attention lavished on them by social investigators. In one plant, productivity went up the more the workers were questioned about their lives and work habits. For a time theorists tried to create an artificial family inside factory gates, with the obvious paternalistic implications. Now it appears that Hillary Clinton seeks to duplicate the Hawthorne effect by making the nation a still more artificial family.

JOHN M. JORDAN
Concord, Massachusetts

To the editors:

In his otherwise excellent search for Clintonism's meaning, Leon Wieseltier overlooks a book that apparently left its mark on the First Couple: *The Greening of America*. It was published in 1970 by Charles Reich, a professor at Yale Law School, which both Clintons were then attending. The book claimed that the rising generation was assuming "a new consciousness," one of "openness to any and all experience. It is always in a state of becoming." That description still fits. A TNR editorial ("The Gerund Gap," May 31) quotes former Senator Eugene McCarthy: "The Clinton administration is turning out to be all gerunds ... happening, formulating, consulting, negotiating, evolving."

That's not all. People of the new consciousness "talked, endlessly, and held endless meetings." They constantly sought "forms and ways to be 'together,' " such as group travel and sensitivity sessions. President Clinton's bus rides and marathon meetings have passed into common lore. And in January, he held a Camp David encounter group where he told staff and Cabinet members that his grade-school classmates had taunted him for being chubby.

Today you can buy *Greening* only in used-book stores where moldy shelves teeter on cinder blocks and the proprietor is stroking a cat named for a pre-Socratic philosopher. But its spirit lives on in the White House.

JOHN J. PITNEY JR.
Claremont, California

To the editors:

Though I very much enjoyed Leon Wieseltier's "Total Quality Meaning," I fear that in his haste to deflate the Clintons' ethos of meaning, he may have unduly discounted the benefits of TQM as a management philosophy.

TQM will not energize the human spirit or reorder our social framework. Nor will it necessarily produce harmony between the various competing interests within our predominantly capitalist society. Nonetheless, TQM remains a potentially powerful tool for organizations. There are concrete steps managers can take to improve both the climate within the workplace and the quality of service an organization provides. The value of such improvements should not be undervalued.

DOUGLAS ALLSWORTH
Phoenix, Arizona

To the editors:

In all the discussion about the source of President Clinton's philosophy and the politics of meaning, I believe Leon Wieseltier gives him too much credit for cultural sophistication. After all, Clinton is also known for staying up late at night munching Doritos and clicking between NBA games and the late movie on cable.

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The true source of his politics can be found in the decidedly low-brow (except for Mr. Spock) *Star Trek V: The Final Frontier*. The protagonist of this movie is an ill-fated mystic who attracts followers with such speeches as: "Your pain runs deep. Let us explore it. Each man hides a secret pain that must be exposed.... Share your pain with me and gain strength from the sharing."

THOMAS S. MOWLE
Colorado Springs, Colorado

A new covenant

To the editors:

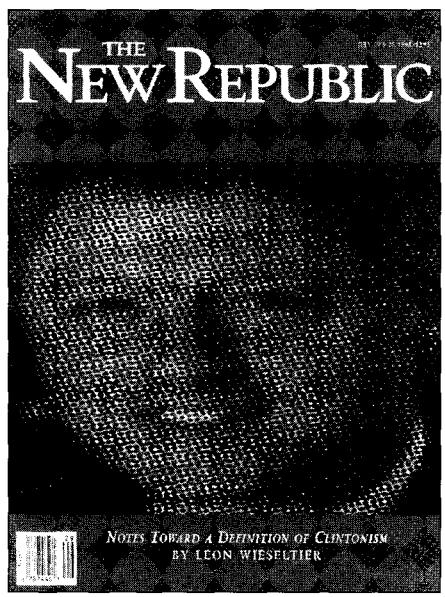
Jacob Weisberg ("The Rights Stuff," July 19 & 26) has it backward when he criticizes the Clinton administration for paying too much attention to human rights standards and too little attention to "democracy" at the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna. Sounding a favorite neoconservative theme, Weisberg prefers advocacy of democracy because, he claims, it can be defined more precisely.

In fact, the vagueness and pliability of the concept of democracy gave abusive governments such as those of China, Burma and Iran one of their most effective weapons in Vienna. Seeking to legitimize their closed political systems, these governments challenged the universality of human rights standards, arguing they should not apply equally to all people.

By making "democracy" a centerpiece of U.S. human rights policy—as Secretary of State Warren Christopher did in his speech in Vienna—the Clinton administration provided ammunition for this attack on universality. That is because "democracy" has no formal status in such international treaties as the widely ratified International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Nor does "democracy" have an agreed upon meaning: it might be a Westminster-style government, a presidential system or, in its less legitimate variants, the socialist "democracies" of the former Soviet bloc or the brutal, elected regimes of Latin America that the Reagan and Bush administrations trumpeted as "democracies." Because of the lack of a clear definition, an emphasis on "democracy"—rather than on the particular human rights standards contained in international law—ends up supporting the dangerous argument that human rights standards are open to interpretation in light of cultural differences.

Neocons and their allies in the administration argue that because "democracy" is supposedly the best guarantor of human rights, individual cases of human rights violations should be tolerated while long-term efforts are pursued to build democracy. Insofar as this argument is premised on faith in majoritarianism, it founders on the example of such elected tyrants as Serbia's Slobodan Milosevic. And insofar as it asserts a societal interest in "democracy" that transcends the fundamental rights of individuals, it smacks of the same "collective rights" that Weisberg correctly decries in many of the arguments heard in Vienna to justify suspending individual liberties. There is simply no effective substitute for the direct and forceful promotion of specific human rights standards.

KENNETH ROTH
Human Rights Watch
New York, New York



Jacob Weisberg replies:

I criticized the administration not for paying too much attention to human rights standards in Vienna, but rather for paying too little, for not thinking clearly about what are and are not human rights. Also, I do not "prefer" democracy to human rights or claim it can be "defined more precisely." I do believe democratic development should be a goal of American foreign policy. Unlike Kenneth Roth, I don't think it conflicts with the goal of promoting human rights.

Ottoline's burden

To the editors:

As a matter of historical record, I would like to address two points raised in Samuel Hynes's friendly review of my biography of Lady Ottoline Morrell ("Sex in the Head," July 12). He suggests that her husband, Philip, philandered because Ottoline had turned from him. I point out in the book that it was Philip who informed Ottoline on their honeymoon that he did not find her desirable, and that his affairs preceded hers, beginning in 1906.

Hynes applauds Philip's stance in the House of Commons in 1914-18, as do I. Hynes goes further in suggesting that his speeches could not have been made by "a weak, unstable man." Philip Morrell was a weak man whose backbone was his wife. His mental instability is clearly recorded in the journals that his wife wrote and that he later read, amending them where he thought them untrue or evasive. He made no alteration to the references to this tragic instability, a form of schizophrenia of which he was not the only victim in his family. (There have been four, to my knowledge.) Should we ignore Lytton Strachey's mention of Philip's "lunacy" in 1918, overlook the mass of journal references to his "nerve attacks," shrug off his bizarre courtship of Virginia Woolf at the time when Ottoline was dying? Hynes is at liberty to describe me as a partisan; if I am, it is because the evidence for praising Ottoline's survival of a degrading and humiliating marriage seems irrefutable.

MIRANDA SEYMOUR
London, England

Bond values

To the editors:

How lovely to read about Fred Barnes's bonding weekend with his son (Washington Diarist, "Quantity Time," July 12). We can only hope that Freddy is exposed to more of the real world than Fred obviously has been. For the vast majority of fathers, as well as many mothers, the choice between work and family is often quite real. Barnes may enjoy the luxuries of combining work and family in a weekend getaway and of "skipping out of work" to attend his kids' activities when he chooses, but most parents do not share these options. Barnes, along with many of his fellow conservative pundits, exhibits the tendency to view and judge the world from his own personal circumstances—a rather selfish and unprofessional approach for a journalist.

NANCY G. PRED
Winnetka, Illinois

The editors welcome correspondence from readers. Letters should include the writer's full name, address, and telephone number; be typed double-spaced; and be held to under 200 words. Letters may be edited for space. Please address letters to: Correspondence, TNR, 1220 19th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

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FROM WASHINGTON

Good book

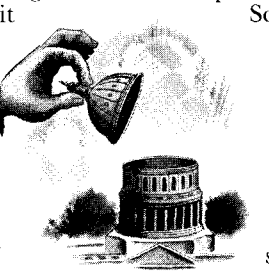
Will Simon and Schuster never learn? The giant publishing house is already mired in controversy over its publication of *The Last Brother*, in which author Joe McGinniss puts thoughts in Ted Kennedy's head without ever having interviewed him. Now, unapologetically, the same company proposes to publish a book whose author strikes an even more flagrant pose of omniscience.

It's "The Bible." Yes, *the* Bible, King James version. At long last, God is getting the kind of major publisher's "big book" treatment formerly reserved for literary figures such as Philip Roth or General Norman Schwarzkopf. A makeshift advance copy (known in the trade as "bound galleys") of "The Bible" arrived in this office the other day, with S&S's signature yellow cover and the customary warning: "UNCORRECTED AND UNPUBLISHED PROOFS. CONFIDENTIAL. DO NOT QUOTE FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL VERIFIED WITH FINISHED BOOK." (Or what? You'll be turned into a pillar of salt?)

However, it does not violate the author's confidentiality—in case He is still doing some last-minute polishing and searching for *le mot juste*—to reveal that He takes McGinniss-like liberties in reporting events, quotations and thought processes; inserts Himself into the narrative in a style worthy of Hunter Thompson; and scatters sex scenes with the calculation of Jackie Collins.

The publishers, meanwhile, actually brag that their only editing of the original manuscript was to "remove the repetitions, cumbersome genealogies and legal codes." Nixing those "cumbersome genealogies" means no more "begats." This is a useful improvement. When you begin the begats, as Cole Porter once noted, it's hard to know when to stop. No "legal codes" is even better news: finally, we can eat bacon.

"The Bible" arrived with a letter from S&S Editorial Director Alice Mayhew, addressed to one of my NEW REPUBLIC colleagues, saying, "A few words from you would be helpful in getting more people than ever to do what we've all meant to do and, frankly, what we all need to do—namely, to read the Bible. We would be grateful if you could offer us a quote." How flattering, frankly. The word of God, it seems, needs a few words from a journalist to put it over the top. ("In the beginning were a few words," as the Good Book puts it.)



And what a terrific opportunity. The solicitation of advance words of praise—known as a "blurb"—for use in promoting a book is one of the cherished rituals of publishing, and the source of much petty corruption of the I'll-scratch-your-back-if-you-scratch-mine variety. This, though, is something special. After all, what could be better than having God owe you a favor?

But supplying a suitable blurb for the Bible poses a unique challenge. The old standbys—"Essential reading," or "If you read only one book this year, make it this one," or "His best yet"—seem inadequate somehow. "The greatest story ever told" is a bit obvious. The S&S edition's own introduction actually describes the Bible as "so good that I could not put it down"—as well as "compelling stuff" and "the book to which all who wonder, who question, who seek first turn." So those clichés are used up.

The conventional superlatives of book hype take on uncomfortable double meanings in this context. "Awesome"? "Powerful"? "A revelation"? "Hallelujah"? "A literary miracle"? "Absolutely divine"? And the ordinary comparisons fall a bit flat. "If you liked *The Bridges of Madison County*, you'll love 'The Bible'"? "Makes Rush Limbaugh look like Beatrix Potter"? "Don't take John Grisham to the beach this summer—take God"? My best suggestion was, "Belongs in every hotel room in America." Maybe you can do better.

I would love to know how God happened to sign with Simon and Schuster. Was there an auction? How big was the advance? We do know from the Bible itself that this author is a tough bargainer. Once before, when He felt one of His manuscripts was underappreciated, His literary agent staged quite a scene. To quote, without permission, from the uncorrected galleys:

"Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tablets out of his hands, and broke them beneath the mount. And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it." Thus cowed (so to speak), they renegotiated the contract.

Meanwhile, I can hardly wait for the book tour. It will start, naturally, with an appearance on "Larry King Live," on some night when Ross Perot is not available. (LK: "So what's it like, really, to be God?" G: "You should know, Larry. No, seriously, Larry, it's great, really great, and I just hope I can give something back to the community.")

He'll take phone calls, of course. (LK: "Davenport, Iowa—Hello." Caller: "Yes, Larry, your show is great and I'd just like to ask your guest to explain this flood, because ..." LK: "Whoops! Gotta cut you off. Thanks for calling. Next call, Sarajevo ...") Then will come book signings in 200 cities—simultaneously.

But, as Alice Mayhew says, what we all need to do, frankly, is to read the Bible. And I'm going to, frankly. Just as soon as I finish *The Last Brother*.

MICHAEL KINSLEY

COMING

- Kai Erikson on America's Floodlands
- Martin Jacques on the West's Cultural Revolution
- Jean Bethke Elshtain on Anita Hillism

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

AUGUST 23 & 30, 1993

CAN CLINTON GOVERN?

The bill squeaks through the House and Senate, barely, over the objection of a nearly solid block of Republicans. With the concessions and cutbacks made to get it past legislators, it bears only a family resemblance to the bold idea Bill Clinton articulated during the campaign. The plan's most fervent advocates say they are disappointed that the president has capitulated to their opponents. The opponents claim even the salvaged rump of the plan will be disastrous to the economy. Attacked from both sides, the White House wanly claims a victory.

This scenario describes the passage, last week, of Bill Clinton's national service program. It also applies to most of the other significant domestic policy initiatives of the first seven months of his presidency: campaign finance reform, gays in the military, the spotted owl logging settlement in the Pacific Northwest and the deficit reduction package, which as of this writing seems likely to squeeze through by the narrowest of margins. None of these initiatives has emerged from the legislative process with the purity or finality for which we and others had hoped. In the inevitable disappointment that follows partial victory, it has been tempting to dwell on the flaws, to cast Clinton as too quick to concede or even as a betrayer of his own ideals. But the progress, in each of these instances, is still real. In none of them was the compromise equivalent to collapse. Those who continue to assert that Bill Clinton has been a disappointment or cannot govern need to recognize what they have so far failed to accept: that politics is about compromise—even when the party that controls Congress also controls the White House.

It would be easy to paint the national service bill passed by Congress and soon to be signed by the president as a major retreat. Clinton initially pitched his plan as a "Civilian G.I. Bill," which would have cost some $7 billion in the first four years, taken in hundreds of thousands of volunteers and spawned what he called in his inaugural address a "season of service." Those who participated would have received a $10,000 voucher for college for each of two years, bringing closer the moment when, as Clinton put it, everyone who wanted to go to college could afford to do so. During the campaign, this scheme was popular and even appeared to have a modicum of Republican support.

In the legislative process, however, compromises had to be made at every stage—in formulating the proposal, in allocating resources to it, in appeasing the Congressional barons on the relevant committees and finally in gathering votes to break a filibuster that Republicans perversely denied was happening. Public employee unions demanded that the program not displace any of their members, or potential members, which means many of the jobs that need to be done most urgently, such as infrastructure repair, will not be open to national service workers at all. The Congressional Defense committees insisted that the college chits be smaller than the ones young people earn in exchange for military service, which means national service won't really pay for much college. Those lucky enough to get into the scaled-back program will receive a measly $4,725 a year in loan forgiveness. Thus, two years of service will pay for just a bit more than a year at most public universities or about one semester at an Ivy League college. Budgetary constraints meant the program's

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price tag had to be reduced to $1.5 billion over three years.

On the other hand, national service is close enough to the spirit of what Clinton proposed to count as a genuine legislative achievement, and as a promise fulfilled. With 20,000 jobs its first year, as Senator Harris Wofford of Pennsylvania points out, it will be larger than the Peace Corps ever was. Early next year, volunteers will be working in hospitals, in schools, helping the elderly and cleaning up toxic dumps. If the program is a paradigm of diminished expectations, it is also an example of how a vague, visionary proposal can rapidly translate into reality. Even in its diluted form, national service is the first really new domestic program of any sort enacted in over a decade. And it's the first since Kennedy to address itself to the nation's spiritual condition, rather than some concrete problem. If it works, says William Galston of the White House Domestic Policy Council and one of the plan's intellectual forefathers, national service will create a "virtuous circle," where efficacy breeds more support, and support increases its annual appropriation. Indeed, it makes sense for the untested program to start small, prove itself first, then expand.

If Clinton won 80 percent of the national service program he wanted, the percentage drops to 60 percent for his campaign finance reform plan and still less for his effort to allow gays to serve openly in the military. Still, each of these compromises was defensible under the circumstances. The president simply did not have the votes to get either proposal through Congress in the form he would have preferred. Clinton could bring about public financing of congressional campaigns by decree. But the compromise the Senate passed—which promotes voluntary spending limits, combined with public financing for the opponents of those who reject them—is workable, and will help stop the exponential expansion of the cost of running for office.

As long-time advocates of full equality for gays in the military, we are more disappointed at last month's compromise, especially as codified by Senator Sam Nunn, who seems far more antagonistic toward a Democratic president than he ever was to his Republicans predecessors. But if the compromise allows the die-hards in the military to save face, and begets a real reduction in the persecution of gay and lesbian servicepeople, it is a clear step forward. Compromised, yes; incoherent, surely; but better, undoubtedly.

Of course, the critical issue of Clinton's first year has been the economic plan. Here, too, there is plenty of room for disappointment, as we have repeatedly pointed out. Clinton's original plan didn't reduce the deficit as much as it might have. With the exception of a few symbolic gestures, it didn't tackle agricultural and other middle class subsidies. It didn't take a major whack at out-of-control entitlement spending. From the early moments, Clinton got rolled by Western senators who wanted to preserve indefensible subsidies for mining and ranching interests. That set the stage for a series of other cave-ins, culminating in a forced retreat on the energy tax. In the end, the program is predicted to cut the deficit by $496 billion over four years, not even reaching the benchmark of $500 billion. Though press spokesperson Dee Dee Myers says this is like getting a 98 on a test, to us it seems more like running twenty-five-and-a-half miles of a marathon and then dropping out. The difference isn't significant—just depressing.

But let's place blame where blame is due. The biggest villains are the Republicans in the House and Senate, who have decided as a group to oppose Bill Clinton's budget without proposing an honest alternative of their own. The rise of Bob Dole as team captain has meant the disappearance of the responsible Republican as a species within the institution. John Danforth, Pete Domenici, John Chafee, Bob Packwood and others who in the past could be counted on to urge compromise, or even defect to the Democrats, have been effectively silenced. All are against the plan on the specious, Bushite grounds that it involves new taxes.

Fault also lies with the preposterous Ross Perot, whose shameless attacks on the president are not supported by any realistic alternative, and with the Senate's several non-conformist Democrats, who are reveling in their unexpected veto power—the schizoid David Boren, chief among them. (Boren breathtakingly demands more deficit reduction, while being chiefly responsible for removing the single most effective deficit-cutting proposal in the package—a broad-based energy tax.) We sympathize with those who have put forward principled arguments for more aggressive spending cuts. We have agreed with them from the beginning. But they should remember that they have wrested considerable concessions from Clinton already. The package is now free of much of the pump-priming it contained to begin with; its spending-cut-tax-increase-ratio has been shifted slowly in favor of spending cuts; it has been designed—correctly—not as a means to fine-tune the economy, but as a first step toward putting public finance back in some kind of order. And it does: $496 billion is $496 billion more than anyone else is credibly proposing to save.

As with so much of Clinton's first few months, this is neither intellectually satisfying, nor anything close to addressing the crux of the matter: a deficit still raging out of control. But in judging the Clinton administration's first steps, the perfect may not be the best yardstick. In several areas—national service, civil rights, campaign finance, deficit-cutting—a start has been made. It has been constructed by a young and inexperienced administration in the teeth of a spectacularly fickle public and a rebellious Congress. And this beginning, unlike the palliatives of Bush, is not based on phony figures or abiding cynicism about what government can usefully do. It's time for the country—and Washington in particular—to give this presidency a break. What, after all, did we really expect? A revolution? •

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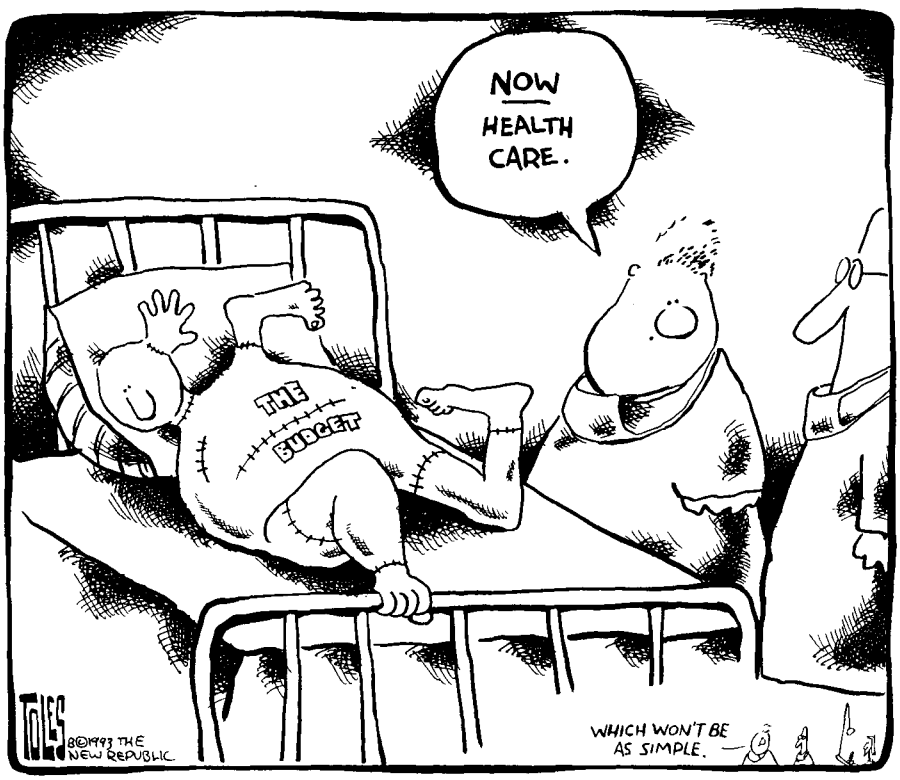
NOTEBOOK

ERM R.I.P.: Last week saw the final collapse of the European Exchange Rate Mechanism, a contraption guaranteed to provoke instant drowsiness in the minds of Americans, when it does not lead to high-minded approval. But the story of its unraveling is not without its political lessons. The whole logic of European economic unity, as conceived by Jean Monnet at the height of the cold war, was essentially rendered obsolete by the Soviet collapse. Its linchpin—the Franco-German alliance—now looks crankily constrictive in the wake of the expanding and multiplying possibilities of a freer continent. Its pretensions to unitary foreign policy were revealed to be completely hollow by the Balkan debacle. Its grandiose bid to build a common currency was wrecked by the effects of German unification and monetary austerity on a depressed and disparate continent. The truth is: there is no single political unit in Western Europe and there never has been. This may be lamentable (although why unity should always be preferable to diversity is beyond us), but it is true. While no one should be opposed to greater economic cooperation and freer trade on the continent, that is no reason to support untenable and overbearing attempts to homogenize the politically distinct. Americans should be glad at the break-up of Greater Europe, and not simply because it might mean an uptick in world economic growth: it is a victory of organic political and economic development over the rigidities of ideological abstraction.



GOOD NEWS FOR STARBUCKS: According to *The Washington Post*, "David Broder and Haynes Johnson will collaborate on a book for Little, Brown and Co. Titled *The System*, it will use the health care reform debate to examine workings of the political and government systems."

FAMILY FEUD: We've been critical of Washington's "family fixation" if it means pandering to suburban angst while engaging in euphemisms about the collapse of families among the underclass. But not all of the administration is in denial about this, or blithe about the solutions. Last week in Nashville, the vice president chaired a conference of family service pros from around the country. The gathering focused on the role bureaucracies play in stifling what few effective government measures there are. Too often, programs follow their own logic, rather than that of the problems they're supposed to remedy. Thus, a child abuse program operates independently of a drug abuse program that operates independently of a program for teen-aged unmarried mothers that operates independently of a job program. Burdened families often deal with as many as ten such programs, all well-intentioned, all costly. The program structure treats family members as if they are isolated individuals, as if their problems are not connected, as if we can tackle a family crisis without seeing human behavior as family-based. Al Gore did not suggest a simple solution to this troubling state of affairs; but the conference was an admirable attempt to address it in a way that was obviously not driven by p.r. concerns or political grandstanding.

MY BOBBY TAKES THE MORNING TRAIN: "Invaluable suggestions also came from our friends Michael Mehdesian, Sheena Easton, Kimberley Allen Hack, Steve Nissen, Gary Ross, John Emerson, Nathan Gardels and the esteemed designer, Bijan." —from the acknowledgments to *RFK: Collected Speeches*, edited and introduced by Edwin O. Guthman and C. Richard Allen, just out from Viking.

BEACH-THINKING: This is a double issue and TNR will not appear next week. The editors will spend their holiday contemplating what they would like to do to David Boren. •

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Big Blue Meets Big Mac

A quick comparison of two realities of the modern business world

Corporate Downsizing	McDonald's
IBM to eliminate 39,000 more jobs as part of a $9 billion downsizing maneuver	billions and billions served
ex-CEOs	*crew chiefs*
millions of white-collar workers callously tossed into the post-industrial labor pool	older workers seen as a good source of flexible, uncomplaining labor
depressions common among laid-off employees	*Happy Meals™*
computer training seen as means of increasing one's re-employability	french-fry computer both easy and fun to operate
expensive blue suits not conducive to watching daytime T.V.	*snappy, free uniforms*
nostalgia for $100K per annum salary with perks	minimum wage and free orange drink when the boss isn't looking
stress lines	*zits*
clubby old boy-type atmosphere vanishes	"Join the Family"
very few golden parachutes	*thousands of Golden Arches span the globe*
headquarters won't return phone calls	spiffy headset units just like the one Madonna wore in *Truth or Dare*
good chance to catch up on sleep	*breakfast service ends at 11:00 a.m. sharp*
golden handshakes	golden fries
grimace of superior delivering the bad news	*'Grimace,' the lovable cartoon character—part of McDonaldland's colorful menagerie*
smart downsizees have lawyers negotiate early retirement benefits	free straws and paper napkins ungrudgingly supplied with every meal
a beer or two during the day helps kill the time	*McDonald's in Paris serves wine*

Douglas Coupland

Welcome to Japan's 'Crossfire.'

Nodding Heads

By Joanna Pitman

The television studio is wall-to-wall pale pinks and greens. Big bunches of flowers, mugs of coffee and soothing pastoral prints contrive to produce a cozy living room ambience, and on soft, pastel-colored sofas sit the hosts of the show. There is an avuncular gentleman in loose conservative tailoring who looks as if he might be wearing a pair of woolly tartan slippers beyond the range of the cameras. Beside him perches an attractive young woman in a short skirt and chandelier earrings, possessed of perfect dentistry and a compulsion to nod vigorously at every word uttered within earshot.

Music so slushy that you need Wellington boots to wade through it gushes out of the studio sound system. It is time for millions of families all over Japan to settle in over their breakfast rice and pickles to watch the "Super Morning Show."

"Super Morning" is no cozy knitting program or potted geranium growing class. It is Japan's answer to "Nightline" or "Crossfire." But while American programs pay celebrity interviewers to excoriate their important guests and invite members of the public to try their hand at making mincemeat out of the famous, Japan's talk shows could never be accused of such piquancy. They are presented as little capsules of honey-smooth harmony, designed to showcase the famous or the mildly celebrated.

Like "News Station," broadcast weekdays at 10 p.m., and another rival news-cum-talk show, "News 23," which goes out every night at 11, "Super Morning" has been politely ushering leading politicians through its hospitable studios during the last few months of political upheaval. Morihiro Hosokawa, Japan's new prime minister, was seen comfortably cushioned, giving windy vents to his ambitions to introduce political reform. Tsutomu Hata, the mild-mannered former Liberal Democratic Party finance minister and leader of the six-week-old Japan Renewal Party, had some lengthy and uninterrupted sound bites to himself back in April.

Last month, viewers were offered a very amicable intraparty debate on the day *after* the most dramatic election since the war. Yuriko Koike of the victorious Japan New Party sat between Shokei Arai, whose LDP had just lost its parliamentary majority for the first time ever, and Shinichiro Kurimoto, who had just been elected as an independent. Each was given equal time in which to strut and relish his personal victory while

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being lavished with a chorus of politely approving noises from the gentlemanly host, Masato Wakabayashi, whose specialty is turning politicians' wheezing ambiguities into eloquent prose.

Japan's politicians have set new standards for the word "vague." Many of them speak only in hints and allusions. A favorite phrase among members of the new parties is: "Perhaps a strong wind will be blowing next week." The talk show hosts nod in sage agreement and graciously question no further. Ideas and claims, however ludicrous or specious, are always "very correct" or "almost correct" or at least "pretty fascinating and well worth thinking about"; but they are never, ever wrong.

Confrontation, belligerence or passionate displays of controversial beliefs are considered unseemly. One television reporter, recently given a single shot at a question for the disgraced LDP kingmaker Shin Kanemaru as he was being escorted into jail, memorably asked him what he thought of the weather. Last week, Tetsuya Chikushi, the urbane host of "News 23," had Takako Doi of the socialist party in his friendly, library look-alike studio on the day Doi had almost scuppered the fragile governing coalition by placing party principles above coalition unity. Sticking fastidiously to a list of questions in front of him, he covered almost every issue but the important and potentially embarrassing one of coalition harmony, or lack thereof. Lapping up a winning series of ingratiating smiles from her host, Doi got away barely having to confront it at all.

A few Japanese I know who have watched and been able to follow "Crossfire" on CNN International admit to a certain thrill, but are baffled at the idea of argument for argument's sake. The closest they came recently was a live televised debate during the elections, broadcast by the NHK, the Japanese equivalent of the BBC. The "debate," however, was so passive it could have been a Methodist camp meeting. In two rounds of scrupulously timed five-minute slots allotted to each participant, each man stuck rigidly to prepared statements and carefully avoided ticklish references to each other. None asked questions of his opponents. No one had to look at anyone else: they were all seated behind separate tables, positioned in a straight line, and chairs were pointedly of the non-swiveling variety.

Everything was going along swimmingly, sounding like a bland series of political party broadcasts with the help of the supremely polite stopwatch "moderator," until disaster struck. Something spontaneous happened. The leader of the socialist party, nearing the end of his allotted time and perhaps sensing (correctly) that he had little to lose, turned in his chair to look directly at the then prime minister, Kiichi Miyazawa, and actually called him a liar.

Whoops of delight went up in foreign press rooms all over Tokyo. Japanese journalists blinked in shock as television cameras swung round to zoom in on Miyazawa's face. But no. There was to be no response. Miyazawa stared on unblinking, gazing out over the heads of the audience, looking a little like a music critic grappling with a particularly difficult Scriabin sonata.

Encouraged by their Western colleagues, a few of Japan's bolder talk show hosts have had swivel chairs installed in their studios, have swapped the friendly flowers and soft colors for black leather and sophisticated sculptures and have staged more shows with rival politicians to see if a bruising squabble will push up the ratings (although most of them still respectfully issue each guest an advance list of proposed questions—and in a few cases suggested answers too).

But the odds are against the new aggression catching on. A women's university magazine recently surveyed students and discovered that Japan's bluestockings favor Hata and members of the LDP's self-styled "handsome trio" because "they are important," "they are good-looking" and they "remind me of my father." It would be most unwelcome, therefore, if Wakabayashi, star host of "Super Morning," were to cultivate a tough new style, designed specifically to trip up honorable guests on his debate programs. Walking along T.V. Asahi Street in central Tokyo the other day, I met a gaggle of Wakabayashi fans who had been waiting to see their hero emerge from the television studios that give the street its name. I asked one middle-aged woman why she was so taken with this man whose voice is a velvety caress, who is the national monument to debating harmony. "He is the best debate host in the business," she replied, clutching a freshly scrawled autograph to her breast, "because he is never beastly."

JOANNA PITMAN is the Tokyo correspondent for *The Times* of London.

ISTANBUL POSTCARD

CALL ME MADAM

By Simon Sebag Montefiore

Mathilde Manukyan is a 76-year-old widow, a grandmother of four who goes to church every Sunday—and who happens to run a real estate and manufacturing empire worth an estimated $200 million. Last year she paid $1.2 million in taxes alone. This makes her the richest woman in Turkey and probably in Europe. Until recently, Mrs. Manukyan was a well-kept local secret. She never appeared on the lists of Europe's richest, but her wealth has become so vast that it is no longer possible to conceal.

When I arrive at her palatial apartment, which takes up a whole floor in Istanbul's exclusive city center, I am shown into a room filled with gold clocks, gilded mirrors and crystal chandeliers. Everywhere there are portraits

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of our hostess as a voluptuous, raven-haired girl. Vases of flowers fill the room with the aromas of the Golden Horn. A guard opens the elevator door; an assistant shows me to a deep damask sofa; yet another brings a glass of Turkish tea with a sugar lump.

The debonair Mr. Enver, managing director of Mrs. Manukyan's complex empire, a suave banker in a pinstriped suit who would not be out of place in the corridors of Goldman Sachs, briefs me on her investments as if we are in a Wall Street boardroom, and not the hothouse apartment of the world's wealthiest . . . madam. It so happens that the cornerstone of Mrs. Manukyan's business empire is her chain of Istanbul brothels, from which she earns around $4 million a year.

"She is very prudent in her investments, so we like property at the moment," says Mr. Enver. "We have no debt, no . . . " Mr. Enver stops in midsentence. He stands up. He almost bows: "*She* is here," he whispers.

Mrs. Manukyan, black-haired and bespectacled but looking years younger than her age, enters the room, giving orders to her plainly terrified staff. She is a plump Armenian lady dressed in a simple white jacket and black skirt. The only hint of her wealth is a solitary diamond that she wears at her neck. She speaks fluent French.

"My name is Credit," declares the redoubtable madam, who approaches debt with the sangfroid of an old money dowager. "I am against debt. I pay for everything in cash. I have more than 1,000 employees. I own about seventy properties and about fifteen cars, including a Rolls Royce, a Mercedes and a Cadillac." Mrs. Manukyan is interrupted by the telephone before she can begin the story of how she made her fortune. Mr. Enver takes the call. It is from one of her factories. They need a decision right away. Mrs. Manukyan takes the portable phone, curtly gives her orders and then puts it down.

"I am a fashion designer by profession. I was always a businesswoman. How I love business!" she cries. "Even before I was married I had my own fashion house making and designing clothes for Istanbul's richest ladies. I came to own my first 'house'"—as she calls her brothels—"quite by mistake. One day a client of mine who owed me a lot of money told me she simply could not pay her bill, which was thousands of dollars. I had no choice but to take it, though I did not tell a soul and I never visited the place." Meanwhile, Mrs. Manukyan's wealthy merchant parents hired a matchmaker to arrange her marriage to another wealthy merchant, a Mr. Hassan. Her husband died young, but not before she had given birth to her beloved son, now an engineer. She never told her husband of her secret investment.

"I went on running my fashion business. I saw no need to tell my husband. I was ashamed. When I finally visited the house, it was chaotic, so I organized everything. Of course, the girls who work there all said, 'Who is this respectable lady?' I did it so well that I bought the other half of the 'house' in 1959. Gradually I came to own most of the whole street of houses. I made them into a profitable business, which allowed me to build up my fortune in textiles, which is still my first love."

"How many brothels do you own?" I ask.

"Six. But I never visit them. I have managers."

There is no shortage of recruits among the thousands of Anatolian peasant girls drawn to the glittering crescent of Istanbul. "We don't need to look far because they present themselves as candidates with legal licenses," she says. "All I demand is orderliness. I do not like the flood of Russian girls who stand in the streets like, like . . . " She is about to say "like prostitutes," but stops herself just in time. She continues: "It is disgusting! I won't have them in my houses! I do feel sorry for my girls, but it is no good trying to reform them. It is their choice to work in this trade. It is quite an entertaining life. Pleasurable, even."

But what about the immorality of prostitution? Mrs. Manukyan briskly dismisses the question. "Morality? Ha! The concept has changed recently, and not for the better. My houses are certainly no more immoral than what young people wear these days in the streets. Short skirts! Half-naked, in public! As for what they show in film and television, *that* is immoral."

Mrs. Manukyan is convinced that her brothels have a therapeutic role in society. "Visiting my houses saves marriages. When husbands visit them, their morale is boosted; sometimes a marriage gets caught in a rut and this improves it. Brothels are necessary and healthy. I believe that for a young man they are a requirement of nature and of God."

Feeling emboldened, I ask: "Mrs. Manukyan, how much does it cost to visit one of your houses?"

At that very moment, Mr. Enver, the proper banker, cannot restrain his love of English literature a second longer and declares: "I love British literature! I love Jane Eyre. Charles Dickens. Milton."

I ask again. Mrs. Manukyan answers:

"I get to keep the first $14, and the girls get to keep everything above that."

"Which is your best brothel?"

"I love Shakespeare. I love Fielding's *Tom Jones*. I love Thackeray's novel *Vanity Fair!*" It is Mr. Enver again.

"Well, I recommend my houses in Karakoy Street," Mrs. Manukyan continues, ignoring the literary passion of Mr. Enver. "Try Numbers Six or Eight or Thirty-One."

Mrs. Manukyan's brothels are legal in Turkey. The prostitutes are supervised by police doctors and given clean bills of health. After the interview, I visit the street that Mrs. Manukyan dominates: it resembles a labyrinthine medieval souk, where a multitude of locals offer their wares and try to seize my wallet. At the top of the street are the houses. Turkish men stare through the open glass doors at the bare-breasted "girls." The ladies who fuel Mrs. Manukyan's empire are sad creatures, posing like curiosities in a Victorian freak show.

Nonetheless, the guilded rise of Madam Manukyan is a testament to the prosperous stability created by Turkey's just deceased and much mourned president, Turgut Ozal. But, more than anything, her life is a tribute to Kémal Atatürk's success in creating a secular Turkish state. Of all the dictators of the '30s, Atatürk is the

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Alan Reynolds, Hudson director of economic research, analyzes Clinton's economic plan in "Tax Policy and Budget Deficits: An Alternative Perspective" (Briefing Paper #153). Reynolds argues that estimates of the yield from new taxes are clearly exaggerated; thus, the administration's plans to increase federal spending on "investment," health, and welfare must result in deficits larger than otherwise. Clinton's plan can only increase inflation, punish economic growth, and fail to reduce the deficit. (Single copies are $2.00, 25 or more are $1.00 each.) Hudson Institute, P.O. Box 26-919, Indianapolis, IN, 46226.

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only one whose vision survives today. His blue eyes still stare down from nearly every wall in Turkey.

"I was born under the Sultanate," Mrs. Manukyan says. "I loved their order and pageantry. But Atatürk was the greatest man, and we already miss Ozal, who was not far behind. You must realize, I have shown what a woman—and an Armenian to boot—can achieve in modern Turkey."

She is so grandly respectable that I barely dare ask: "Has sex played a large part in your life?" Mr. Enver, aesthete to the last, bursts out in a final cri de coeur: "Shelley is Britain's greatest poet!"

Mrs. Manukyan booms, "Sex? Heavens no! I'm not remotely interested in sex. My generation knows *nothing* about it. I am a businesswoman. I am just a woman of action enjoying the prizes of her success. Nothing more. Nothing less." She commands. Servants bring more tea. Mr. Enver quotes Byron.

SIMON SEBAG MONTEFIORE is author of the novel *King's Parade* (Penguin).

WHITE HOUSE WATCH

SPINNING GRIEF

By Fred Barnes

It's President Clinton's story and he's sticking to it. "No one can know why things like this happen," he said in his first public comment on the death of Vincent Foster, the deputy White House counsel and friend of Clinton's since kindergarten. That was July 21, the day after Foster's body was found in a park along the Potomac River. On July 23, following Foster's funeral in Little Rock, Clinton told reporters: "No one will ever know whether there was anything any of us could have done to avoid this." A week later, he told *U.S. News & World Report* that inquiries into Foster's apparent suicide won't turn up much. "I don't think we'll find out much more other than that he was deeply distressed," Clinton said. Even after a note by Foster was discovered, the president maintained the cause of Foster's death will remain a mystery. "That's what he believes," says aide George Stephanopoulos. "That's what he *still* believes."

No doubt he does. But it's also a convenient conversation stopper, a way of not-so-subtly informing nosy reporters: "There's nothing more I'm going to say on this, so don't ask." And it worked. White House reporters were muffled, at least around Clinton. "What have you learned about life this week?" one asked Clinton after the funeral. In the days after Foster's death, Clinton subjected himself to a series of interviews by reporters from Georgia, Texas, New York, New Jersey, Alabama, Indiana, Nevada, California and Arizona, in which he pushed his economic plan. Only once was he asked about Foster. You don't get spin control much better than that. Clinton didn't want to be pumped about Foster, and he wasn't.

In Clinton's world, spin is the universal response. An entire war room was established at the White House to put a favorable spin on Clinton's budget. O.K., in the case of Foster's death, some of the spin was sincere, but it was spin nonetheless. How can we tell? If top White House officials are saying the same thing, repeating the same story line, and it's not very plausible, that's spin control. Mack McLarty, the White House chief of staff, echoed Clinton. "Try as we might, all of our reason, all of our rationality, all of our logic can never answer the questions raised by such a death," he said at a briefing on July 21. "We can never fully know a person's private pain and what might lead them in their thought process, even a person we have known all of our lives." The next day, press secretary Dee Dee Myers said she also had no explanation for the suicide. "I'm not sure any investigation could ever determine why," she said. "These things are mysteries."

Foster's role at the White House was no mystery. He was close to both Clintons, a childhood chum of Bill in Hope, Arkansas, and a law partner of Hillary at the Rose Law Firm in Little Rock. He, Hillary and Webster Hubbell, associate attorney general, joined in a financial venture, Midlife Investments. Foster was the Clintons' private attorney in Arkansas, and he continued to give them personal legal advice in Washington (for free). According to Myers, this is "part of the legitimate function of the counsel's office." When the president learned of Foster's death, he curtailed an interview on "Larry King Live" and rushed to Foster's home in Georgetown. He returned the next night, only this time he learned that Senator Richard Shelby of Alabama, an anti-Clinton Democrat, lived next door. Clinton dropped in for a forty-five-minute chat. Upon leaving, he worked the crowd that had gathered outside.

Notoriety came to Foster three ways. He offered the legal basis for keeping closed the meetings of Hillary Clinton's health care task force, and a federal appeals court ruled in her behalf. Foster didn't fare as well in the White House travel office scandal. He was not reprimanded, as four other presidential aides were, but his name cropped up ten times in the White House "management review" of Travelgate. Foster, the review said, kept Hillary Clinton abreast of travel office troubles. And the counsel's office was criticized for not taking "adequate advantage" of opportunities "to contain the momentum of the incident." Foster also was zinged, along with other former Rose Law Firm lawyers in the administration, on the editorial page of *The Wall Street Journal*.

Clinton's spin on Foster's death was soon undermined by facts. A number of White House aides, it turned out, knew Foster had been depressed. Hubbell and his wife had invited Foster and his wife, Lisa, to the beach in

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hopes of cheering him up. Moreover, Clinton had called Foster the night before the suicide and invited him to a screening of *In the Line of Fire* in the White House theater. Foster declined, but they talked for twenty minutes. This put Clinton in a touchy situation, given that he'd said no one could know what was wrong with Foster. At the time he called, Clinton was spending the evening with Hubbell, and this was the day after the Hubbell-Foster beach weekend. When asked about this by a Texas reporter on July 28, Clinton said: "Unlike some other people, who did know that he'd been quite distressed, I was not really aware of that." Hubbell hadn't mentioned it? Clinton would have us believe he hadn't.

The next episode of spinning came when a torn-up note was belatedly found in Foster's briefcase. Notified of this, White House officials waited more than twenty-four hours before turning it over to investigators. They held meetings and consultations and didn't decide what to do until summoning Attorney General Janet Reno to the White House. White House counselor David Gergen was dispatched to explain the delay. Normally, you'd expect whoever found the note to call the Justice Department, ask what to do with it, be told to hand it over and immediately do so. But Gergen insisted Clinton and Foster's wife had to be apprised first, and they couldn't be buttonholed until July 27, the day after the note was found. Of course, Gergen and McLarty were with Clinton in Chicago when they were notified of the note and with him the next day in Washington. But Gergen contended "the first time we could get to him" was twenty-five hours after the note was discovered.

That's hard to swallow, but Gergen made matters worse when he gave his defense on the "MacNeil-Lehrer NewsHour," his old T.V. chat show, on July 30. He revealed a White House thrown into a frenzy by the note. They knew the note had to be handed over to Justice, he said, "but we also wanted to have a chance to see it and have a chance to talk, and we thought there probably had to be a couple of people who had to be consulted about it. So we came back [from Chicago] and had a meeting the next morning." Before giving it to Justice, "we thought there were two parties that were important to tell and to notify," Clinton and Mrs. Foster. They couldn't inform Clinton of the note on the flight back to Washington? Or in Oval Office meetings with him the next morning? Well, Lisa Foster was out of town and Clinton was too busy, Gergen argued lamely. The impression Gergen left was of a White House weighing whether to turn over the note, devising how to spin its existence and deciding whether to release it publicly (they decided not to). "We could have not turned it over and saved ourselves a lot of trouble," says Myers.

Instead, White House officials reverted to spinning. Foster had written seven or eight sentences in longhand in large letters on a yellow legal pad. The note showed Foster was "frustrated to the point of quitting," says a White House aide. While "paranoid's probably too strong," the aide said, "there's a clear sense of failure" expressed in the note. "This was the writing of a man who was clearly troubled, even distressed, work-related."

But White House spinners leaked that there was something more pointed in the note: a wound suffered because of *Wall Street Journal* jibes. "A key source of Foster's gloom was an early July *Wall Street Journal* editorial that excoriated the White House for exporting a quadrille of lawyers from Hillary Clinton's old law firm in Arkansas," reported *Time*. *U.S. News* said the note cited Foster's "embarrassment" over "*Wall Street Journal* editorials attacking him by name." The suggestion of the *Journal*'s responsibility for Foster's death is preposterous. Foster was nicked far less than other Rose expatriates in the editorials. And the mention of the *Journal* in Foster's note was "fairly oblique," says Myers. It didn't refer to any story in particular.

The trouble with Clinton is he spins when the truth would serve him better. My hunch is the White House has little to hide in the Foster case (though I'd feel more confident if I could read the note). But once spin control becomes common, it soon becomes a habit, then a way of life. Clinton aides now denounce reporters for creating suspicions that the White House is covering up a terrible secret about Foster. Sorry, but the White House has only itself to blame. •

Clinton's corporate giveaway.

TAX BRAKE

By John B. Judis

In his economic program, which he released on the eve of last year's Democratic convention, Bill Clinton promised to raise $45 billion over four years by "cracking down on foreign companies that prosper here and manipulate tax laws to their advantage." It was an important $45 billion: because of it, Clinton would not have to raise taxes on the middle class in order to reduce the deficit.

Chalk up another phony promise. This spring, the Treasury Department estimated that the crackdown would raise only $3.8 billion in revenue over five years. Congress has knocked it down even further. Last month, the Joint Committee on Taxation estimated $366 million over five years—less than 1 percent of Clinton's original number.

At first glance, it looks like the administration's initial number was wildly inflated, but that's not where the betrayal lies. Foreign corporations have been avoiding well over $45 billion in payments in recent four-year periods. If anything, the initial Clinton estimate was too conservative. But with the collection methods that the administration has adopted, it would be lucky to come

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up with $3.8 billion in five years. Where Clinton misled the public was in his statement that he would "crack down" on foreign tax evaders.

Studies from the Internal Revenue Service, the House Ways and Means Committee, the General Accounting Office and the Commerce Department have all pointed to massive tax evasion by foreign corporations. In 1989, the last year for which the IRS has released data, 71.7 percent of foreign firms paid no taxes at all. The reason was a seeming dearth of profits. In 1989 foreign-controlled firms reported taxable income that was 0.9 percent of their receipts, while American firms reported income at 3.1 percent. Foreign firms' income was 0.6 percent of their assets, while American firms' income was 1.8 percent of assets.

The differences were particularly dramatic for Japanese-controlled firms, which for that year reported a net loss of $76 million from their operations in the United States. While all foreign-controlled firms reported a 0.9 percent rate of return, the Japanese reported a phenomenally low 0.03 percent. At that rate, firms would have no incentive whatsoever to invest here. And these foreign firms are not doing to the United States what American firms are doing to foreign governments on their soil. In 1989 American corporations overseas paid taxes on a healthy profit rate of 9 percent. The 700 American firms in Japan paid more taxes to the Japanese government than the 3,700 Japanese firms in the United States paid to the American Treasury.

There are two possible explanations for these wide differences: either foreign firms in the United States are selling their goods at or below cost—in other words, "dumping" them illegally on the U.S. market—or foreign firms are using transfer price strategies to evade taxes. In transfer pricing, a foreign firm in the United States gets a subsidiary at home or elsewhere to overcharge it for parts shipped to the United States. That way it makes less profit in the United States but more profit elsewhere, where effective rates are lower than the 34 percent the IRS charges.

Evidence strongly points toward transfer pricing abuse. The Ways and Means Subcommittee on Oversight found that one foreign-controlled automobile manufacturer sold cars to its American distributor for $800 more than it sold them to its Canadian distributor. A Commerce Department study released last month estimated that as much as half of the difference between the profit rates of foreign and American-controlled firms could be due "to the artificial shifting of income to related parties abroad."

Again, Japanese pricing practices were at the top of the list. Last year the GAO found that for American, British and West German firms, the cost of materials came to 75 percent of their gross income from the sales of final products; for Japanese-controlled companies, costs were 90 percent. That means their profits were being exhausted by the prices they paid for parts.

The IRS itself has acknowledged that massive cheating is occurring. "The U.S. government is being shortchanged billions of dollars annually," IRS Commissioner Fred Goldberg told the House Oversight Subcommittee in 1990. Speaking on background, Washington tax lawyers who represent foreign corporations confirm this charge. One tax lawyer who used to work for the government said, "One of the things I've learned since leaving government is that a lot of companies are indifferent to where they pay taxes, but a whole lot of companies try to zero out what they make in the U.S. so they don't have to pay taxes."

Billions are at stake. At the 1990 hearings, University of Michigan economist James A. Wheeler, who also serves as a consultant to the IRS, estimated that the United States lost $30 billion annually from 1983 to 1986 in foreign tax payments. Wheeler believes that Clinton's campaign estimate was actually too low. "I am not saying you can collect $30 billion a year," he says. "But if corporations were reporting their profits accurately, there would be at least that much out there."

The question is how to get the money. The American government could pressure the Japanese and Western European governments to pay up. This might work with the Japanese, but the Bush and Clinton administrations have been reluctant to bring up the issue. The Bush administration—still concerned about maintaining cold war alliances—neither talked nor acted tough; the Clinton administration has pounded the table in public for specific concessions but settled in negotiations for vague declarations of intent.

The U.S. government could also change the rules by which taxes are collected. Last year several House members introduced bills that imposed a minimum tax on foreign corporations. Even more effective might be imposing the kind of unitary tax that California imposes on foreign corporations—calculating their taxable profits by dividing their worldwide profits by the proportion of sales they enjoy within a state or country. But foreign governments and businesses—aided by American multinationals—have mounted a campaign against this kind of taxation, which has scared off the administration.

Instead of these alternatives, the Clinton administration has modified the current tax laws, increasing penalties for transfer price abuse and requiring foreign-controlled firms to provide better pricing documentation to the IRS. But these methods are woefully inadequate. "It is like trying to police the New Jersey Turnpike on a bicycle," says Washington tax lawyer Martin Lobel.

IRS legal teams are no match for the teams of lawyers, accountants and economists that large foreign companies can command. Says one government official, "When you go up against one of these firms, you are outmanned and outmoneyed." The odds also favor the accused. Transfer pricing cases take up to ten years to resolve, and at best the government can look forward to getting back fifteen to twenty cents on the dollar. Yet the Clinton administration has persisted in pursuing this futile strategy. And that's the reason why it has had to scale down its revenue estimates.

Some administration officials have advanced an economic rationale for their low-pressure position. Treasury Undersecretary Lawrence Summers told critics that

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Where We Stand

By Albert Shanker, President
American Federation of Teachers

Lewd or Rude?

Are we in the midst of a national epidemic of sexual harassment in the schools? That's what a recent report from the American Association of University Women (AAUW), with the ominous title "Hostile Hallways," says.

The figures that the report presents are staggering. Four out of five students say they have been sexually harassed at or on their way to school, generally by other students. As you might expect, more girls report harassment than boys, but the numbers are surprisingly close: 85 percent of girls and 76 percent of boys. Clearly, whatever is going on is not limited to some schools in some localities. Are we to believe that school hallways all over the country look like a K-12 Tailhook Convention when classes are passing?

In fact, "Hostile Hallways" defines sexual harassment so broadly that it can be anything from being raped on the stairs to "unwelcome" words or gestures from someone you don't find attractive. Obviously, if a boy or girl is forced to kiss someone (that happened to 14 percent of those who reported being harassed) or forced to do "something sexual other than kissing" (that happened to 11 percent), it's harassment—it's also against the law. But a smile or compliment that you *feel* is sexual—and offensive—also counts as sexual harassment, even though you might welcome exactly the same thing from someone you like. And the glance/gesture/remark kind of harassment is by far the most frequently reported.

Instead of showing students the distinction between acts that are criminal and acts that are merely rude, the AAUW's definition of harassment levels that distinction.

AAUW's survey says that this broadly defined sexual harassment creates a "hostile learning environment," but the evidence doesn't support this claim. Only one-third of the youngsters who said they had been harassed identified any academic effect. The most frequent response was "not wanting to go to school" (23 percent)—though only 16 percent actually stayed home. Given that many kids seize any excuse to cut school, this is hardly convincing evidence of great trauma.

Other effects most kids reported sounded like routine responses to an unpleasant incident or situation—like being being embarrassed (50 percent) and feeling self-conscious (37 percent) and avoiding the other person (49 percent). No one enjoys feelings like these, but are they likely to "interfere" with a student's life? Most adolescents regularly suffer from them—for a variety of reasons—without being permanently scarred. And it's not just adolescents. Is there *anyone* who at some time has not had such feelings?

This is not to deny that a large number of students are being sexually harassed at or on the way to school. At least 26 percent of students report experiences that would fit in with any definition of harassment, however narrow. These kids are clearly victims, who deserve and need help. And it is not to say that a kid has to be physically assaulted before it is sexual harassment. *Seventeen* magazine (September 1992) carried a horrifying story about a young girl who was tormented for two years by obscene graffiti about her that kept appearing in the boys' room in her high school.

But what possible benefit is it to anyone to define sexual harassment so broadly that it includes most of the kids in a school—a girl who doesn't like the way a guy looked at her as well one who suffered several broken bones when she was attacked? It trivializes the injustice against boys and girls who have been greatly harmed. Instead of showing students the distinction between acts that are criminal and acts that are merely rude, the AAUW's definition of harassment levels that distinction. It's like saying that someone who uses offensive speech is guilty of the same crime as someone who firebombs a church. Schools should not be in the business of fostering this thoughtless use of language.

There's another problem, too. This attitude towards sexual harassment, which AAUW hopes schools will make into a code, is sending the wrong message to students about their rights and responsibilities. It teaches kids that they should never question their own motives, actions and perceptions—only the other person's. It encourages them to think that they have an absolute right never to be offended: There's no need to learn to handle themselves with all kinds of people, some of whom they are bound to find obnoxious; they can report anyone who offends them.

Is the AAUW getting students ready to support speech codes based on similar assumptions? Are they preparing kids to feel at home in our litigious society, where everybody is a victim and people sue each other at the drop of a hat?

Sexual harassment is a serious crime, and it should be punished. But we will never be able to deal with it if we confuse—and teach our kids to confuse—giving someone the eye, and rape.

Mr. Shanker's comments appear in this ad under the auspices of the American Federation of Teachers. Reader correspondence is invited. Address your letters to Mr. Shanker at the AFT, 555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20001. © 1993 by Albert Shanker.

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going after foreign corporations would discourage needed investment in the United States. That's a worry, but by not collecting these taxes the government is increasing the budget deficit and indirectly fueling the trade deficit. And Summers's position ignores the advantage that foreign-controlled corporations gain over domestic companies because of inadequate tax collection. Says Lobel, "The American companies that don't have access to transfer operations are subsidizing those foreign companies who are abusing the tax system."

Kevin Kearns of the U.S. Business and Industrial Council, which represents smaller manufacturers, says, "There is a bias against American firms in the way Treasury regards taxation. It thinks that for foreign firms taxes are a cost of doing business and it worries about raising their costs, but when it comes to American firms, it doesn't worry about costs, but about how much revenue it can raise." Kearns, like other representatives of small business, has gone from guarded optimism about the administration to embittered pessimism. Looking at how Clinton has kept his promises, it's no wonder. •

After ideology, corruption.

THE OLD WAR

By Daniel Bell

Corruption, it is said by cynics, is present in all political societies. But it does take different social forms. In totalitarian societies, corruption is the arbitrary use of power. There is no rule of law. The decrees of the dictator, or the party, override everything else. There are no checks and balances from institutions or competing groups; and few appeals against verdicts from the top. In a democracy, on the other hand, corruption is money. The politician needs to be elected, and modern campaigns are costly. Businesses seeking contracts will bribe officials to win a job, or politicians will demand money to award contracts.

For most of the postwar era, our attention has been fixed on totalitarian societies. But now that the cold war is over and the megalomania of Communist leaders such as Romania's Ceausescu and the Soviet nomenklatura have been revealed, democratic corruption has become one of the surpassing political issues. The bipolar world dominated by the Communist-capitalist dichotomy has been replaced with a politically unitary one, divided between the corrupt and the clean. This, perhaps, is the real division in world politics today.

In the past year there have been sweeping and repeated revelations of corruption in many democratic countries. The roll call is frightening: Japan, Italy, India, Brazil, Venezuela on a major scale (leaving aside the habitual corruption of many African regimes), and Germany, Spain, France, even Britain, on a minor scale. In the United States, the revival of populism has been fueled by tales of perks and privileges in Washington.

What's troubling here is the rise of an anti-political mood—one that goes beyond the standard refrain of "throw the rascals out" and resembles more closely the revolution of resentments in Europe that, in the 1920s and 1930s, led to the demand for a "strong man" who would clean out those Augean stables. While history does not return in the old epicycles—putsches are unlikely—these scandals do pose a threat to the stability of all: at stake is the nature of *trust*, since trust underlies the willingness of a people to obey laws and to accept the legitimacy of a society.

Japan, for example, is experiencing a crisis of leadership. The Liberal Democratic Party, which had governed for almost forty years, lost its majority for the first time, because of corruption. The Socialist Party, previously the major opposition party, lost half its seats. With three new parties, two of which are LDP offshoots, there is no longer an effective majority. Japan lacks political leadership at a time when crucial security and trade issues have to be resolved. (The internal economic policy will be directed by the bureaucracy in the Ministry of Finance.)

In Italy, the entire old political class has been discredited, with 2,500 politicians and businessmen under criminal investigation. The Socialist Party, led by Bettino Craxi, and the dominant Christian Democratic Party, which had been ruled by Giulio Andreotti—seven times the prime minister and now accused of Mafia collaboration—are broken, a reform of the political structure is in the offing and new political forces on the right and left are taking shape.

In India, the government of Prime Minister P.V. Naraimha Rao is paralyzed. Rao himself has been accused of accepting 10 million rupees ($371,000) in illegal cash contributions. And major ministries, including Defense, Commerce and Industry, are without ministers. Both the left (Socialists and Communists) and the growing right (the Hindu revivalist Bharatiya Janata Party) have joined forces in the Parliament against Rao, whose Congress Party is riven by factional conflicts. If Rao's government falls, two serious issues confront India. The Congress Party, the country's only secularist national party, would be weakened. And the economic growth and the development of a nascent middle class, both brought about by Rao's economic reforms, would be jeopardized.

Some Latin American countries, which only recently have taken hesitant steps toward democratic rule and economic liberalization, are in trouble. In Brazil, the world's sixth-largest nation, with a population of more than 150 million, President Fernando Collor de Mello was impeached for corruption and ejected from office in December 1992. In all this there was considerable irony: Collor, a young and telegenic personality, had been elected two years before on the promise of eliminating

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WHY ALL AMERICANS SHOULD SUPPORT A MORATORIUM ON IMMIGRATION

FACT: More alien workers entered the U.S. labor market in 1992 than jobs were created, according to Immigration Service and Department of Labor statistics. America's disadvantaged workers suffer disproportionately from the steady influx of low-skilled, low-wage labor. The Zoe Baird incident was only the tip of the iceberg.

FACT: The Census Bureau now projects that there will be 383 million Americans in 2050, largely because of what *The Washington Post* describes as "massive immigration." That's 50 percent more Americans than there are today, and 83 million more than the Census Bureau projected just four years ago.

FACT: Thousands of illegal immigrants enter the country every day—2 million to 3 million a year. The law admits more immigrants and other workers than the economy can absorb. Fake documents are easily obtained, providing access to benefits meant for legal residents.

Our national political leadership is apparently unaware that a majority of Americans of all ethnic backgrounds favor reduced immigration (Roper Poll, May 1992; Latino National Political Survey, December 1992). In fact, immigration policymakers seem more concerned with pleasing the special interests than doing the will of the people they are elected to serve.

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corruption and reforming the economy. He had lectured Brazilians on the need for "belt-tightening" even as real wages had fallen by half and inflation was running at 20 percent a month. When it was revealed that an associate had extracted millions of dollars in bribes from businessmen seeking government contracts, and that the president had spent $2.5 million alone in creating new gardens for his home, hundreds of thousands of people came into the streets to protest. While there was fear of military intervention—Brazil had been under military rule for twenty-one years—the Senate was able to exercise the procedural powers under the Constitution of 1988. The country is relatively stable now, under the leadership of the new president, Itamar Franco. But the promises of change in the economy have not been realized, and investment in Brazil is uncertain.

In Venezuela, Latin America's wealthiest country, President Carlos Andrés Pérez was impeached in May 1993 for embezzlement. For thirty-four years Venezuela enjoyed democratic government; its enormous oil reserves underwrote a welfare state and lubricated a system of patronage in government. Then came the oil collapse in 1989, and the real income of Venezuelans dropped to nearly two-thirds of what it had been a decade ago. Pérez made himself unpopular by scrapping subsidies and by enacting painful economic reforms. The outrage arose, however, not so much at the new austerity, but because the president was enriching himself personally at the same time. And that is the crucial political lesson of the world situation: there has to be a connection between the ruled and the rulers in democratic states, an avoidance of one-party systems, a mechanism to avoid the political corruption that tends to accrue when deep ideological and political divisions do not keep politicians honest.

One half-solution may be found in Mexico. Carlos Salinas has managed to remain free of a polity polarized around the issue of corruption (despite presiding over a corrupt one-party system) by launching a movement called Solidarity. A Jack Kemp-style organization that provides capital and technical help to communities and groups to build schools and roads and sewers for themselves, Solidarity was devised by Salinas as a way to build a base of support independent of the party bosses. But even here, the durability of this device is unclear. Under the Constitution, the president can serve only one six-year term (which ends for Salinas in 1994), and already maneuvers are under way for his successor. Even if Solidarity survives and strengthens, the freedom of the society from a polarizing struggle over the corruption issue will depend on the transition of the political system to more open, democratic forms.

Are there any real "solutions" to the patterns of increasing public alienation and political corruption that we see emerging across the West? And can any of these avoid the more authoritarian solutions we have seen in the past? The cynic will scoff that one cannot change "human nature," and that any institutional changes are bound to be ineffective when the self-interest of individuals is at stake. Yet there are two examples of political purity in the West that give one pause.

The first is a country. With a few minor exceptions, Great Britain has been an exemplar of political morality for more than 100 years. Yet in the first half of the nineteenth century, England was as hopelessly corrupt as any "modern" society today. Carrying coals to Newcastle was more than an economic oxymoron, for the Duke of Newcastle himself was the outstanding symbol of the rotten borough managers who bought whatever they wanted with money. Yet by the end of the century, the situation had changed. The large number of licenses and permits that had been necessary for doing business had been reduced substantially, and with that the need to bribe government officials. The Corrupt Practices Act of 1883 "turned the poachers into the gamekeepers," as the historian Asa Briggs put it, and made the election agents the guardians of public morals at election times, ending century-old malpractices. But behind all this, and embodying the new Victorian morality, was the new emphasis on "the gentleman," with his code of proper conduct and the suspicion of "the religion of gold." It was taken for granted, as Trollope wrote in his autobiography, that "to serve one's country without pay is the grandest work a man can do." It is true that Lloyd George sold peerages to the nouveau riche and that titles sometimes carry their own form of corruption (snobbery), but the fact of historical transformation still remains in the history of English political morality.

The second example is an American institution: the Supreme Court. For almost 200 years, it has been virtually free of the taint of corruption. Apart from the high calling associated with the position, what has been crucial is the independence and security that appointments to the Court have provided. As Walter Bagehot put it, the best form of government management was to be by a select few who enjoyed "a life of long leisure ... varied experience by which the judgment is ... incessantly improved." Justices Warren, Brennan, Blackmun and Souter were appointed by Republican presidents, yet each demonstrated an independence of judgment the security of tenure provided. John Marshall Harlan and Lewis Powell responded to the idea of a judiciary of gentlemen.

Could one do the same with Congress, where the scramble to raise money has led consistently to demeaning behavior? Perhaps. One answer might be to set a term limit for members of Congress—three terms for senators, and four terms of *four* years for representatives—and then recruit the retirees into a "third chamber," whose pension plus an additional income would give them financial security. This chamber, call it the House of Counselors, would be the pool for the commissions and independent bodies that evaluate policy and advise the government. Given their experience and judgment, we might thus have a group of disinterested individuals ready to act as gentlemen and gentle-

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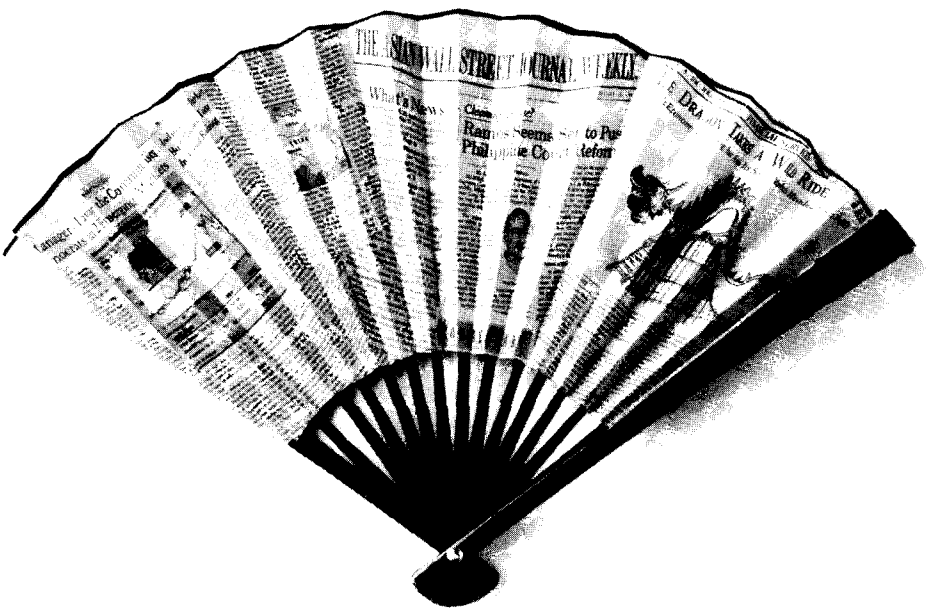

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women—or gentlepersons—for their country.

In the end, it is hard to avoid the larger moral question that is tied up with the fate of democracy and capitalism—of capitalism as a system of economic reward, and democracy as a system of civic loyalty and trust. Democratic capitalism may have survived the battle with totalitarianism, but it has not survived the battle with itself. The 1980s, in the United States and Japan, was a decade of "greed." The ethos said that making money by manipulation, by inflating assets, by heavy borrowing in junk bonds was fine. Our children are now beginning to pay the bill for this folly.

In Japan, Tasushi Mieno, the governor of the Bank of Japan, who pricked the bubble of the inflated Japanese boom, has been quoted as saying that the giddy expansion of the late 1980s "undermined the stability and soundness of Japanese society by weakening the ethos of labor, the notion of working by the sweat of your brow." The boom, he said, hastened "a decline in morals," and fostered "inequalities in the distribution of wealth."

If capitalism is still to confront the ethos of "greed," democracy has to confront the problem of trust. In almost every society, the distrust of the political order and of politicians is rising, often feeding reactionary forces that seek to channel the resentments of a population into religious fundamentalism or a rising nationalism. The money corruption becomes the symbol of the breakdown of trust in democracy. The rebuilding of trust can only begin with the rectitude of the politicians and the moral authority of a political class. That is the great task that confronts democratic societies in the years ahead. It is not one of technique, but of virtue.

DANIEL BELL is a scholar in residence at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

The right's new immigration gambit.

ALIENS AMONG US

By Michael Lind

Most of the set positions in the American debate over immigration are familiar. Liberal internationalists believe that generous immigration policies promote American prestige and ideals. Pro-labor liberals oppose unskilled immigrants who compete with natives for scarce entry-level jobs. Old-fashioned conservatives more or less openly oppose non-white immigration, in order to preserve the nation's ethnic or racial "character." Libertarian conservatives favor the immigration of cheap, non-unionized labor; *The Wall Street Journal* has proposed a constitutional amendment consisting of five words: "There shall be open borders."

In the past, neoconservatives, or former cold war liberals, tended to take the liberal internationalist line, in part for sentimental reasons, since many are the children or grandchildren of turn-of-the-century Jewish and Catholic immigrants from Europe. But now, some neoconservatives are putting forth a new argument: unskilled Third World immigrants can provide cannon fodder in the cultural wars.

This is the argument laid out in two recent essays in *Commentary* and *First Things*. (There were previous tremors in conservative circles. Some time back, *National Review*, edited by John O'Sullivan, a British citizen and a resident alien of the United States, published an eloquent restatement by Peter Brimelow, a naturalized British immigrant, of traditional American conservative arguments against immigration.) Writing in *Commentary*, Francis Fukuyama argues that the right is mistaken in thinking that immigrants threaten the continuity of American culture: "The symptoms of cultural decay are all around us, but the last people in the world we should be blaming are recent immigrants" from Asia and Latin America, who actually have strong "family values." According to Fukuyama:

> The ideological assault on traditional family values—the sexual revolution; feminism and the delegitimization of the male-dominated household; the celebration of alternative lifestyles; attempts ruthlessly to secularize all aspects of American public life; the acceptance of no-fault divorce and the consequent rise of single-parent households—was not the creation of recently arrived Chicano agricultural workers or Haitian boat people, much less of Chinese or Korean immigrants. They originated right in the heart of America's well-established white, Anglo-Saxon community.

Conservative suspicion, instead of being directed toward Asian and Latin American immigrants, should be focused on subversive native-born Americans "like Kevin Costner, who believes that America began going downhill when the white man set foot here, or another American, Ice-T, whose family has probably been in the country longer than Costner's, and who believes that women are bitches" (though it is Fukuyama, not Ice-T, who laments "the delegitimization of the male-dominated household"). Fukuyama concludes with a call to arms deliberately echoing Pat Buchanan's Houston speech: "In the upcoming block-by-block cultural war, the enemy will not speak Spanish or have a brown skin. In Pogo's words, 'He is us.'"

Richard John Neuhaus, writing in *First Things*, the journal he edits, agrees that the real threat to American culture comes not from immigrants, but from substantial segments of the native population: "A serious problem is posed by the aliens among us." These "aliens" are not immigrants, but "the urban and mainly black underclass," "a civil rights overclass" (also largely black), "homosexuals" who "are the very definition of social marginality" and "journalists, writers, academics and a

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significant portion of the religious leadership" of the United States. Though Neuhaus is no anti-Semite, his categorical denunciation of blacks, gays, intellectuals and elites as "aliens among us" is chillingly reminiscent of anti-Semitic denunciations of "anti-national" and "cosmopolitan" elements.

Since Jews tend to become targets of all populist movements as they degenerate, one wonders why any Jewish neocons would sanction demagogic attempts to unite conservative whites and immigrants by railing against unpopular minorities. Indeed, the driving force behind today's pro-immigrant conservatism comes not from Jewish conservatives but from Catholic traditionalists like Neuhaus and George Weigel, president of Washington's Ethics and Public Policy Center.

The convergence of Catholic conservatism and pro-immigrant attitudes has cold war precedents. In the '50s, reactionary Catholic traditionalists looked to an idealized premodern Central Europe as an alternative to commercial America and the Communist East. Their traditionalism and their anti-communism were both served by their support of a liberal immigration policy toward refugees from "captive nations" such as Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. These days, however, the most fertile sources of Catholic immigrants with anti-liberal values are Latin America (though even there Catholicism is losing ground to American-style evangelical Protestantism), parts of Asia and Africa.

At the moment, Latin America looks more promising than Africa as a source of illiberalism. Catholic conservatives have viewed with favor the spread of evangelical Protestantism in Latin America at the expense of what they regard as left-wing Catholicism. Some Protestant evangelicals have returned the compliment by adopting the new conservative arguments for immigration. "Much of the new immigration from Latin America and the Pacific Basin tends to be conservative, pro-family and devoutly religious," says Ralph Reed, executive director of Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition. "They're our voters." Reed warns that in the past, Republican opposition to immigration "sent previous waves of immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe into the waiting arms of the Democratic Party." (Reed seems not to have heard of Republican opposition to the New Deal.)

The Catholic traditionalist alliance with Protestant fundamentalists is merely tactical, of course. Neuhaus, in his essay on immigration, writes that now that members of "the Protestant Descendancy" have "turned themselves into aliens in their own land," it is time for Catholic Americans to depose the decadent WASPs (and, presumably, establishment Jews as well). As leaders of a political army of Catholic Latino immigrants, conservative American Catholics could achieve three goals: they could become the dominant partners in a Catholic-evangelical political coalition, the leaders of a neo-traditionalist American Catholicism and perhaps even the successors to WASPs as what Neuhaus calls the "defining" population in the United States. Neuhaus (who is a recent convert to Catholicism, as well as an immigrant from Canada) proposes precisely what nineteenth-century Protestant nativists feared—a bid for social and political hegemony by American Catholics, whose numbers have been swelled by immigration.

But the alliance is more pleasing in theory than it is effective in practice. True, the Catholic Church in New York City, in alliance with Robertson's Christian Coalition and Latino evangelicals, orchestrated a successful campaign to oust public school chancellor Joseph Fernandez, claiming falsely that the controversial "Rainbow Curriculum" was designed to brainwash first-graders into becoming sodomites. In subsequent school board elections, however, the far right's showing was unimpressive, even though the Catholic clergy passed out voter guides prepared by Protestant fundamentalists.

Catholic-fundamentalist-Latino alliances might form in other cities and states. A white-Latino coalition might elect Rudolph Giuliani, a moderate Republican, mayor of New York—just as a similar coalition elected Richard Daley, a machine Democrat, in Chicago. But the cultural cleavages that divide Latino immigrants from Southern whites and white ethnics might prevent any lasting coalition. Orange County Republican homeowners feel more threatened by poor Mexican immigrants than by upper-middle-class lesbians. And the Republican formula of lower minimum wages, lower government benefits and fewer public services has little appeal to economically struggling immigrants.

The other catch is that the next generation of immigrants may react against their conservative parents. Far from leading a counterrevolution to restore Old World values to the United States, the assimilated children of the newest immigrants may cherish the limited but real gains in sexual freedom and tolerance that cultural conservatives oppose. It is worth noting that the first gay pride event sanctioned by a Cabinet officer took place recently in the Transportation Department of Federico Peña. The liberal Democratic candidate in the L.A. mayoral race, favored by the Hollywood elite that Fukuyama denounces, was Michael Woo. And, of course, the former New York school chancellor who symbolizes the decadent cultural elite for much of the right is named Fernandez.

Neuhaus dismisses liberal mainstream American Protestants and Catholics as lost in a "wilderness of alienation from the American experience." That is a better description of the minority of conservatives who advocate an immigration-driven transformation of the American racial mix that will dilute the influence of blacks, homosexuals, intellectuals and women who reject traditional roles, along with mainstream Protestants, Catholics and Jews. Such a radical scheme is the very opposite of conservatism. But then, genuine conservatives would never demonize entire categories of their countrymen as "aliens among us."

MICHAEL LIND is executive editor of *The National Interest.*

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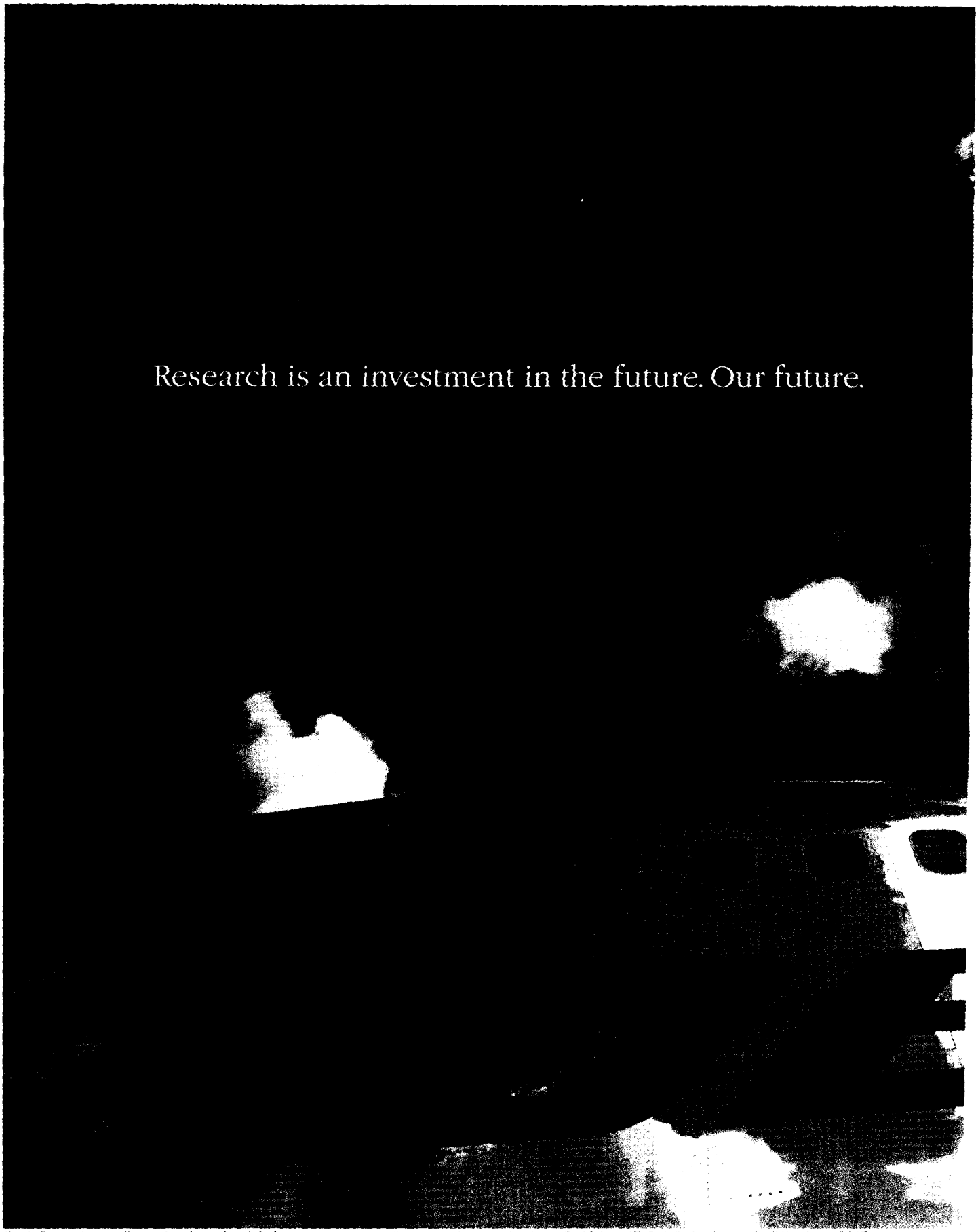

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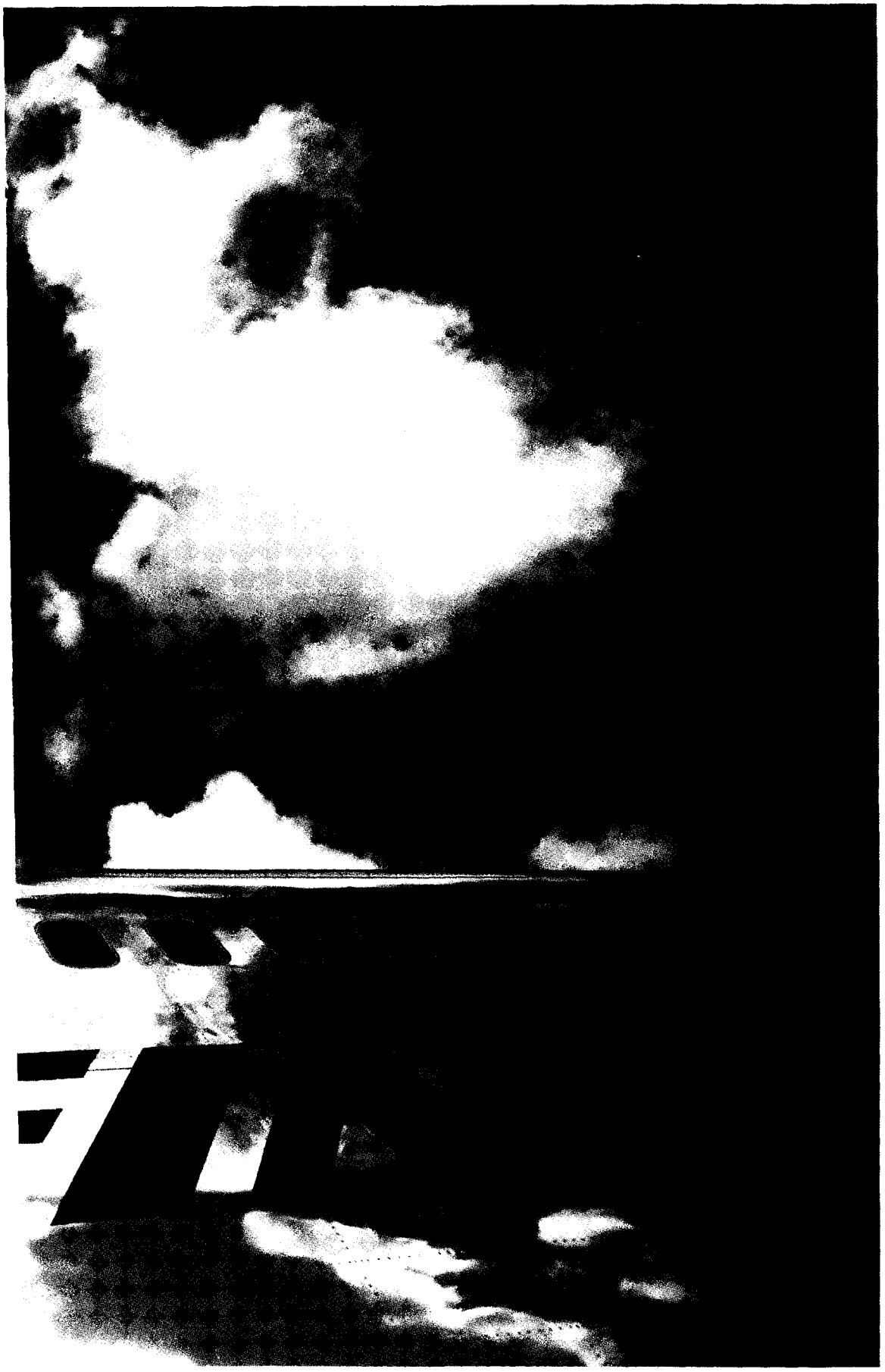

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A guide to the infighting.

MOSCOW MELTDOWN

By Jeffrey Sachs

If Russian politics is akin to a chess match, the reformers and the reactionaries are in the end-game. Last week's ludicrous currency reform—in which old rubles were summarily declared void by Russia's Central Bank—was a ruthless gambit by the reactionaries, as explicable in political terms as it was senseless economically.

The struggle is in many ways an economic *Fathers and Sons*. The old guard, epitomized in the persons of Parliament speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov and Russian Central Bank chairman Viktor Gerashchenko, continues to fight the arrival of Russia's new generation, led by the reformist minister of finance, Boris Federov, and the privatization minister, Anatoly Chubais, both in their mid-30s.

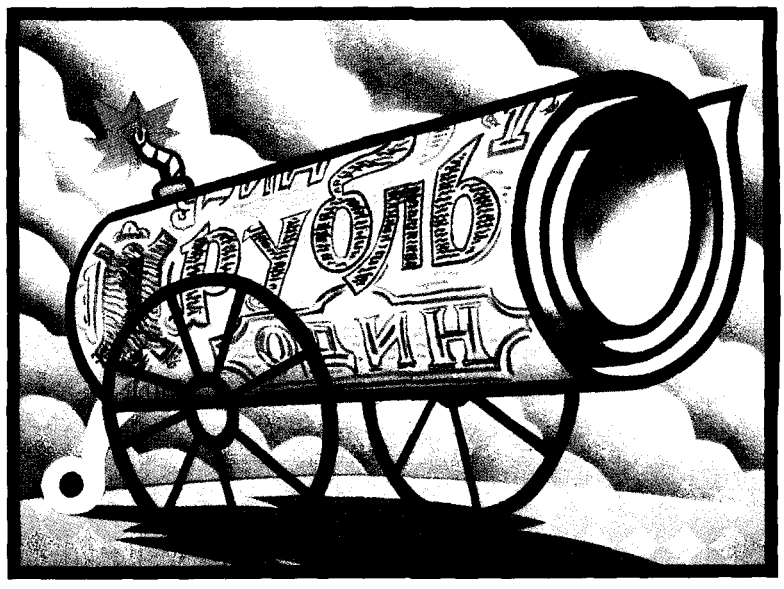

ILLUSTRATION BY MILAN TRENC FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

One of Yeltsin's remarkable traits, aside from his skill at democratic politics, has been his commitment to shielding the younger reformers from the intrigues of politicians of his own generation. Federov was actually Yeltsin's first finance minister when Yeltsin became head of the Russian government in 1990. At that point, Yeltsin was still under Gorbachev's thumb, and real reforms in Russia were blocked by the Soviet Communist Party. Federov resigned in frustration at the end of 1990 and joined the capital markets group of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in London. At the end of 1992 he moved to the World Bank as Russia's executive director, and then was called back to Moscow by Yeltsin at the start of this year. Chubais, the brilliant tactician of Russia's mass privatization program, is a remarkable blend of policy-maker and hands-on politician who rose to prominence in St. Petersburg's first democratic elections.

Federov's talents are matched only by his disdain for the ineptitude and double-dealing of Gerashchenko, his counterpart at the Russian Central Bank. In the last year of the Communist regime, Gerashchenko was chairman of the Central Bank of the Soviet Union, and with Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov (later one of the coup plotters) he summarily declared that the fifty-ruble note would be withdrawn from circulation. As with last week's action, the ostensible purpose was to control inflation by limiting the money supply. In fact, the 1991 action led to a public panic, a flight from the ruble into dollars and, in the end, no actual withdrawal of notes from circulation, since the measure was effectively overturned by later actions. But it was a chilling tremor of the tragi-comic events of last week.

Ironically, Gerashchenko's and Khasbulatov's actions were a counterattack prompted by the successes of the reformers after the April 25 referendum. Buoyed by public support shown in the referendum, Federov was able to assert operational control over the Russian Central Bank during May and June. The Bank remained nominally under the Parliament's control, but with the blistering rejection of the Parliament in the referendum, Federov found new room for maneuver vis-à-vis the Bank.

The initial results were as dramatic as they were frightening to the reactionary opposition. Federov quickly secured an agreement with the International Monetary Fund, imposed new operating guidelines on the Central Bank and re-established budgetary discipline within the Cabinet with Yeltsin's backing. In early June the ruble began to stabilize, and even strengthened, after two years of downward spiral. Federov publicly declared, as he left for a trip to the United States, that the conditions for ruble stability through September had been achieved. He jokingly offered a $50 bet to any takers that the ruble would hold firm over the summer months.

Successes came in other areas as well. Chubais won the Cabinet's support (with Yeltsin's arm-twisting) for an acceleration of the privatization program, which has so far succeeded in privatizing more than 70,000 enterprises. At the same time, Yeltsin pushed the political reform agenda by convening a constituent assembly of Russia's eighty-eight regions and autonomous republics in order to finalize a draft of a new constitution. The assembly completed work on the draft and sent it back

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Plastic carnations

"Summer has set in with its usual severity . . . " —Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Two years ago this month, President Mikhail Gorbachev packed his bags and set off with Raisa for his annual holiday in the exclusive Black Sea resort of Foros. His well-earned break from the tribulations of the doomed project of perestroika was cut short by the coup in Moscow. Upon his return, his gravest mistake was to assume that things would continue as before. Within days, the forces of populism marshaled by Boris Yeltsin rolled over him.

Nowadays his successor, anxious to avoid any unfortunate symbolism, takes his vacation in July and superstitiously avoids the Crimea, lest lightning strike twice in the same resort. This year he headed for the pretty, northern Russian town of Novgorod, which his wife Naina likes because it is off the nomenklatura's holiday beat and they can relax there undisturbed, with only their daughters and grandchildren for company.

Yeltsin had barely had time to erect his deck chair, however, when things started to go wrong at home. The mischief of the Russian Parliament and the Central Bank forced the swift abandonment of the Yeltsin family holiday. His Zil limousine is now back in the Kremlin courtyard.

But like his predecessor, Yeltsin appears oblivious to the significance of the events in Moscow. Russians were concerned less with the terms of the forced currency exchange than with the way in which the move was conducted. The news of the bank's intervention was carried by that trustiest of old Soviet steeds, Tass—a chilling echo of the lapidary announcement two years ago that the Committee for the State of Emergency was running the country forthwith. Hordes of concerned savers besieged the banks, asking what right the state had to indulge in a measure reminiscent in style and content of the confiscatory reforms put in place by the Bolsheviks.

Suddenly Yeltsin's prolix press secretary, Vyacheslav Kostikov, a man whose manner is haplessly reminiscent of the porcine propagandist Squealer in *Animal Farm*, was dormant. Suddenly no ministries would take calls from journalists because they were waiting to see what the president would say, and he was saying nothing. There were lines outside food stores as shoppers rushed to rid themselves of their old rubles. It was an unpleasant throwback to a time of secrecy, closed government and bureaucratic high-handedness that Russians had hoped was only a bad memory.

Outside the savings bank on the Ulitsa Dorogomilovskaya, three elderly ladies were counting out a pile of ragged five- and ten-ruble notes. They had put them aside while Brezhnev was in power to pay for their funerals. Then they had seen the value of their nest eggs decimated by the price liberalization of the last year. So they started again, saving the crisp new 100- and 500-ruble bills issued last year that bear the Russian flag instead of Lenin's head. Now these too had been declared worthless. Despite the bright sunlight, the ladies wrapped their black shawls around them as if to protect themselves from the hostile world.

The Russian leader's reticence is particularly odd, given that he is not a man slow to anger or reluctant to address the people with his woes. The muted response to the currency chaos suggests that, contrary to the claims of his aides, Yeltsin was either party to it or at least, like the unfortunate Gorbachev in the run-up to the coup, responsible for a vacuum of understanding in which such an event could occur.

Two possible explanations present themselves for Yeltsin's failure to cancel the intervention. Either he treated the Central Bank's proposal with Reaganesque disdain for detail on hearing it and failed to grasp its disruptive effects both inside Russia and throughout the ruble zone. In this case his grasp of economics is more perilously loose than even his harshest critics feared. Or—and this is the far worse alternative—he is beginning to incline toward smash-and-grab centralized solutions favored by the conservative elements in his Cabinet.

Boris Yeltsin has always exhibited a mixture of old and new mentalities. Despite flurries of rumor that he intends to have Lenin's body removed from the mausoleum on Red Square, the father of Soviet communism still rests peacefully in his velvet shroud, and every Wednesday and Friday a team of Kremlin embalmers is dispatched to tend to his body and prevent shrinkage. The presidential gardeners check that there are three plastic carnations on the graves of former leading Communists.

There are ties with the Communist past that the president is unable or unwilling to break. His autocracy is well documented, and no doubt he needs more than a touch of paternalistic authority to stay in control of his unruly nation. But in times of trouble his instinct is to withdraw from contact with all but his closest cohorts and leave his radical ministers and supporters in the lurch. His defenders argue that a vital part of his strength is derived from his ability to juggle interests. The risk is that this strategy is coming to dominate his thinking so that no solid ideology is discernible behind the gamesmanship.

The reform economist Grigory Yavlinsky hit the submerged but unavoidable truth about Yeltsin's current behavior when he called him "an actor who has forgotten his lines and is looking from one prompter to another in search of the missing cue."

Most disheartening is the disregard Yeltsin has shown for the confusion and disappointment of the Russian people. Yeltsin rose to his present position by challenging a political culture hallmarked by arrogance of the rulers toward the ruled. In the April referendum, he begged for the public's support and got it. Since then, however, he has channeled his enthusiasm for change into the preservation of his own power. The walkabouts that used to impress a population insulted by years of high-handed rule have all but ceased, replaced by increasingly artificial photo opportunities. The Kremlin culture of prepared statements, official silences and plastic carnations seems to have swallowed up the roguish, opinionated outsider.

After the currency fiasco, his ratings reached an all-time low. "He can't even be bothered to appear before his own people at a time like this," said one disgruntled voter. "It seems like the only thing Boris will leave the Kremlin for these days is the opening of a new McDonald's."

As confusion descended on Moscow, it was impossible to ignore the thought that here were conditions in which Russians could start to wonder how much difference there really was between the old masters and the new (a state of affairs carefully orchestrated by the enemies of reform). Over and over again, Yeltsin has escaped from seemingly impossible traps laid by his enemies. This one, however, is more dangerous than those that have come before it, for it is partly of his own making.

ANNE MCELVOY

Anne McElvoy is Moscow bureau chief of *The Times* of London.

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to regional assemblies for comments, with the intention of reconvening in Moscow in August. But most shocking of all to the political class was the confident talk by the reformers of new parliamentary elections in the fall. In the April referendum, 65 percent of the voters had called for new legislative elections, and the reformers predicted that the constituent assembly would approve a new election law in August, at the same time that it would give final approval to the draft constitution.

How long two weeks in Russian politics can be! As Yeltsin and Federov left Moscow in mid-July for a break, the political opposition went into action. Khasbulatov launched a remarkable wave of anti-reform legislation: the Parliament suspended privatization, tripled the budget deficit and declared part of Ukraine to be Russian territory. Although Khasbulatov himself lacks a constituency (his native Chechenskaya has seceded from Russia and has repudiated him as its representative), he was able to accomplish this feat because he runs the Parliament as a private satrap. He feathers the nests of the members with apartments, cars and travel visas, and is their best guarantee against the mortal threat of new elections. In return, he merely demands unanimous voting support.

The Central Bank's monetary reform came just a day after the close of Parliament. On the evening of Friday, July 23, Gerashchenko formally notified the government and the president's office of the intention to ban all pre-1993 ruble notes the following day, and to allow only a partial conversion of the old notes into new notes. The finance minister and the president were out of town, and the conservative prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, convened a government meeting without even notifying the Finance Ministry. The prime minister hurriedly declared the government's assent to the move, despite the absence of documents or independent analysis. The move was announced the next day, to public hostility and panic, as millions of Russians contemplated the sudden confiscation of part of their currency holdings.

Not only is the method of money control—confiscation—as primitive as can be imagined, but the real key to controlling the money supply lies in limiting Central Bank credit to finance the budget deficit. This was being done in a careful program agreed to with the IMF and negotiated over several weeks. (During that time, the Central Bank never broached its "alternative" policy.) And after Yeltsin's watering down of the decree, virtually all old notes will be converted to new notes anyway. Rubles held in the neighboring republics are currently flooding into Russia via black markets to be converted into 1993 bills. There will be no effect on the money supply. The only lasting effect will be a loss of confidence in economic management. It's 1991, repeated as farce.

On Sunday, Yeltsin hurried back from vacation. Finance Minister Federov cabled Yeltsin from the United States, insisting that the Central Bank order be overturned by presidential decree and that the Central Bank governor be pressed to resign (an outcome that seemed imminent in view of the public outcry). Federov spelled out the economic irrationality of the action and stressed that it violated various international agreements between Russia and the IMF. At the last moment, however, Chernomyrdin prevailed on Yeltsin to put aside Federov's proposed action, and merely to water down the Central Bank's order by allowing greater latitude for the public to exchange old rubles for new ones.

It is becoming clear that the Central Bank's action is part of the general revolt against the reformers. While there is still uncertainty about the exact nature and timing of last week's events, it is very likely that the actions of Khasbulatov, Chernomyrdin and Gerashchenko are linked even if not tightly coordinated. Chernomyrdin has repeatedly defended the Central Bank's actions to Yeltsin and to the public. In the grand tradition of the big lie, Khasbulatov has taken to television to denounce Federov as the cause of the Central Bank's actions. Meanwhile, within the government, Chernomyrdin seems to be maneuvering with conservative ministers such as Oleg Lobov, an old Communist apparatchik, to try to overtake Federov's overall reform program.

We're left to wonder: Can Gerashchenko really believe the nonsense he propounds? The sad answer is: Maybe. The man is economically illiterate; his background is disbursing cheap credits to Russian industrial enterprises and schmoozing with foreign bankers. But he is also a liar and a political intriguer—like so many in the Old Guard. His "real" views are always subject to doubt, and his future actions impenetrable.

What the past couple of weeks tell us is that elite politics alone will not rescue Russian reform. What's needed for decisive progress is a breakthrough to new elections that can retire most of the old guard. Yeltsin should simply declare an election date later this fall, even without a formal legislative mandate for new elections. The public is so disgusted with the Parliament that Yeltsin would most likely prevail in setting the new election date, just as he prevailed last April in calling a referendum despite the bitter objections and maneuverings of the Parliament.

The West can do little at this point, except to spell out the stakes clearly to Yeltsin and hold back on financial aid to the Russian government until the reformers are more strongly in place. (Private sector projects should continue, however.) Most urgently, the next round of IMF money should be put on ice until the Central Bank is clearly under the reformers' control, with Gerashchenko gone. If conditionality is to have any bite at all, it should preclude "business as usual" when the reforms themselves are under mortal challenge.

JEFFREY SACHS is professor of international trade at Harvard University and economic adviser to the Russian government.

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Religion and the Life of the Intellect

In many intellectual circles the myth still circulates that religion is the preserve of the dim-witted and unlettered. Yet, recently *The New York Times Magazine* carried an article on the "return to religion" among intellectuals. From Harvard to Berkeley, and amid inquisitive people generally, there's an undeniable renewal of interest in the questions traditional religion raises and seeks to answer. This fascination is largely a result of the failures of secular substitutes for religion (such as rationalism, narcissism, technological utopianism, aestheticism, and extremist political ideologies) to give abidingly satisfying answers to the truly significant puzzles in life: goodness, suffering, love, death, and the meaning of it all.

By no means, however, does this religious renaissance entail embracing the ersatz gods of dog-eat-dog individualism, consumerism, or superpatriotism. Nor does it imply a retreat from working for peace, justice, or human dignity. Rather, there's an awareness that, as Jean Bethke Elshtain put it, religious commitment "can help further social reform," and that religion can supply the ethical bedrock upon which to make political choices which are far more durable than those based on passing ideologies and enthusiasms. Nor does the new openness to religion signify a hostility to science, but rather an appreciation of the limits of science and technology.

The New York Times Magazine article discussed the NEW OXFORD REVIEW as part of this return to religion, and rightly so. We at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW are spearheading today's intellectual engagement with what Daniel Bell terms "the sacred." We are particularly interested in exploring religious commitments that yield humane social consequences, as exemplified by such giants as St. Francis, Gandhi, Bonhoeffer, Barth, Tawney, Schumacher, Mounier, Dorothy Day, Archbishop Tutu, Simone Weil, Martin Luther King Jr., and Archbishop Romero. And we probe the literary and philosophical riches offered by such greats as Kierkegaard, Tolstoy, Buber, Auden, Eliot, Silone, Maritain, Waugh, Merton, C.S. Lewis, Walker Percy, Flannery O'Connor, and Graham Greene.

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Old Times, New Times

When comedians flounder, it's not because they lose their ability to perform. It's their judgment that goes. This has been true of Mel Brooks for more than ten years, ever since *The History of the World–Part I,* continuing through *To Be or Not to Be, Spaceballs* and *Life Stinks.* Now there's **Robin Hood: Men in Tights** (20th Century Fox). If Brooks's judgment is going, can't he be helped? Isn't there anyone around him with enough gratitude for his past work to protect him from these embarrassments?

He was always best on his own, as a solo act or with one "feed," rather than as a collaborative screenwriter, director and ensemble player. His very best was off-the-cuff riffing. Anyone who has heard the 2000-year-old man record knows that Brooks needs to *be* the show, improvising insanely. In the mid-1950s I had the good luck to be present at a few parties in New York when Brooks, then a writer for Sid Caesar, was there with Carl Reiner. Reiner, his ideal straight man, would introduce him as a German scientist or Italian film director or whatever, feeding him questions for his character, and Brooks would fly. Tirelessly. I've never been so exhausted by hilarity in my life.

But he trudges on in ensemble work, as producer, director, co-author and actor. *Robin Hood,* which he co-wrote with Evan Chandler and J. David Shapiro, is a monstrously unfunny affair. It clings to an old Brooks idea—modern stuff in a period story. E.g., alas: someone uses an electronic remote control to lower a portcullis in a castle; a group of black men in period costume do a rap number about Sherwood Forest. When this sort of thing isn't agonizing us, there's an exotic character named Ahchoo and whenever he's introduced someone says, "God bless you." There are jokes about gays. There's a witch named Latrine whose family discarded the prior name of Shithouse. And let's not overlook Brooks himself as an itinerant rabbi—his parody of Friar Tuck—who demonstrates the principle of circumcision (inaccurately) with a tiny guillotine.

My sides ached to ache as they used to at those bygone parties. If only Brooks, alone or with a "feed," would try to recapture that first fine careless rapture.

Two new films raise questions that they don't directly address. **Poetic Justice** (Columbia) is the second picture by John Singleton, the young black writer-director who did *Boyz N the Hood.* **Amongst Friends** (Fine Line) is the first film by the young white writer-director Rob Weiss. Both pictures deal with young people—blacks in South Central L.A., whites in the well-to-do Five Towns of Long Island. Both are trite stories as such; both have gun play; both have ceaseless profanity. Few adults who have been going to films at all in the last ten years can be surprised by anything that happens in them. Few can be entertained by them, let alone enlightened. Few, I think, will escape some tinge of despair.

Poetic Justice begins with the gross murder of a young man that has absolutely no effect, past initial shock, on the young woman who is embracing him in a car when a gun is put to his head. (This woman is played by Janet Jackson, the hit singer.) Most of the story is about a trip from L.A. to Oakland in a U.S. Mail van, driven by a postal employee who takes his girlfriend (Jackson) and another couple along. Their quarrels and reconciliations are front and center, though they are interwoven with episodes in the beauty salon where Jackson works. Much of the salon chat is about sex.

The supposed "quality" of the film comes from Jackson, whose film name is Justice (her mother was in law school when she was pregnant) and who writes poetry. This poetry was in fact supplied by Maya Angelou—written at (deliberately, I suppose) the high school level. Angelou also appears in the film briefly as a fount of sagacity. But the poetry is only froth on a steady boil of pointless bickering between run-of-the-mill young people, laced with groin talk from the beauty salon.

Amongst Friends deals with people of about the same age, all white, mostly male, from fairly well-heeled families. The film corroborates, if that's its point, the well-known fact that environment and race have little to do with the drug-dealing and violence of young people. The centerpiece of this grim banquet is a romance between a young fellow who spends two years in the pen after he's busted for dealing, and a neighborhood girl who has waited for him. Two murders occur, more or less under the aegis of an aged Jewish *capo.* The film ends with a moment of overblown juvenile

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Guilty As Sin. *A moderately twisty thriller, empowered by the acting of Rebecca De Mornay and Don Johnson and the directing of Sidney Lumet. (Reviewed 7/5/93)* **In the Line of Fire.** *Clint Eastwood as a Secret Service agent who failed to protect JFK adequately and is now guarding the current president. John Malkovich as an avowed assassin. A real zinger. (8/9/93)* **Much Ado About Nothing.** *Much ado about a great deal. Emma Thompson and Kenneth Branagh excel in this generally exquisite rendering of Shakespeare's comedy-drama. (5/10/93)* **The Music of Chance.** *Paul Auster's novel sensitively transmuted. James Spader and Mandy Patinkin, as two poker players who pay a weird price for losing, are in tune and on pitch. (6/21/93)* **—SK**

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nostalgia before one of the friends, a murderer, sets out on a motorcycle for a new life in California.

Both of these young filmmakers, Singleton and Weiss, are much better as directors than as writers. Singleton's screenplay is disjointed and pedestrian, his directing is close to professional competence. He has nothing like a style, and he's not immune to cliché. (A sexy woman is introduced with a shot of her leg as she steps out of her car.) But he's at home in the medium.

Weiss's screenplay is basically sentimental, another one of those pictures that claims realism while being unbelievable. (Don't the Long Island police investigate murders? And detain suspects?) However, his directing shows some flair. His casting could be more visually acute: too many of his people resemble one another. But he has absorbed ideas from the directors he has watched. From Spike Lee, the device of two people addressing the camera in rapid alternation; from Scorsese, a traveling shot focused on an object—in this case, a joint passed along a line of people in lawn chairs; from dozens, the camera that completely circles an encounter. Certain kinds of borrowing show talent; and Weiss is a likely candidate for growth.

What's depressing about both films is that they got made. It's as if Singleton knew from experience, and Weiss from observation, that the financing for young directors is easier when the material is f-studded, gory and morally unencumbered.

We can't complain of inaccuracy in the texture of these pictures: the press substantiates them daily. Then, if we complain about the films' material, aren't we really complaining about society? Certainly, but not solely. There are more troubles in our society than drugging, etc.—as Hal Hartley and Jim Jarmusch and Philip Haas and Julie Dash have shown. And there's the strong suspicion that the Singletons and Weisses and the like are using the credentials of authenticity with a touch of cynicism. That's the ultimate complaint. •

Robert Brustein on Theater

Travel Packages

The New York theater is much preoccupied with package tours these days. You can visit a variety of exotic places without ever leaving your seat. Terrence McNally's **A Perfect Ganesh** (Manhattan Theater Club) is an extended journey through the tourist spots of India, while Michael Rudman's production of **Measure for Measure** (New York Shakespeare Festival in Central Park) whisks us across the seas to a lively Caribbean island much like Trinidad.

Of the two, *Measure for Measure* is by far the more attractive travel package, though you wouldn't know it from the brochure. The Shakespeare Festival, like most off-Broadway theaters, uses *Playbill*, a generic publication that restricts production information to credits and bios, in lieu of its own program. This particular edition seems not only irrelevant to the show displayed on the cover but even rather antagonistic. Included among the Broadway features and restaurant guides are some ill-tempered verses by Robert Patrick decreeing that "The avant-garde / Has got to be barred / From covering Shakespeare with slime" and concluding, "Why do you do Shakespeare" if "you're going to dance it in Bali or mime it in ancient Beirut?" A more cogent question might be why do not-for-profit theaters distribute such irrelevant publications instead of their own dramaturgical materials?

I'm not a big fan of site-specific Shakespeare myself, but I'm puzzled by the continuing assumption that there's only one appropriate way to do the plays. Every new production is a fresh transaction with the text, and if the performance has consistency and integrity, then the interpretation is justified. Michael Rudman, who conceived this production two years ago in London, has certainly justified his own approach. It's a wonderful opportunity for a multiracial cast (mostly African-American) to bring vital vibrations to a dark and difficult play.

I don't know who supervised this particular undertaking. George C. Wolfe, the new producer of the Festival, staged a very similar Caribbean version of *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* two years ago, set in Haiti. But since he was busy rehearsing Tony Kushner's *Perestroika*, I suspect that the task fell to Kevin Kline, one of the festival's co-producers, who plays the part of

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the Duke. Whoever is responsible, the production represents a departure from the theater's non-traditional casting procedures. Instead of a color-blind mixing of racial and ethnic groups, as in JoAnne Akalaitis's *Cymbeline*, this *Measure for Measure* is relatively color-conscious. There are a few whites on this calypso island, but the native population is essentially Caribbean black.

The approach works perfectly well, somewhat in the manner of *Swinging the Dream*, an all-black jazz production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in the '30s, or the all-black versions of *Carmen* and *The Hot Mikado* in the '40s. Purists might sniff a trace of resegregation in the air, even a whiff of colonialism since the Governor of this island is Caucasian. If so, they're being oversensitive. The Act V engagement of the white Duke Vincentio and the black Isabella, not to mention the final intermarriage of the black Claudio and the white Juliet, restore a healthy climate of racial integration.

The whole affair is so good natured that it's virtually irresistible anyhow, and if this *Measure for Measure* tends to ride over the major problems of the play, it's still terrific summer entertainment. From the moment the lights go up on John Lee Beatty's *al fresco* setting (garish murals, slatted windows, dried plaster walls) and the native cast emerges singing Andre Tanker's calypso melodies (some pushing carts, some wielding machetes, some with baskets on their heads), the ambient world is fully established. The entrance of khaki-clad island policemen signals the entrance of the Duke, whom Kline plays with becoming modesty and retiring diffidence in a blue blazer, vest and white trousers. You don't stop to question his motives for convulsing his dukedom, or for delaying the exposure of his deputy—he's much too charming.

Andre Braugher as Angelo has shaved his head like Michael Jordan and displays a choir boy's cherubic features. But he invests this ice-cold bureaucrat with fundamentalist fervor. Ruben Santiago-Hudson is a strong, insinuating Lucio, a character out of *Porgy and Bess* in his checkered suit, black shirt and two-tone shoes. Lisa Gay Hamilton's Isabella, diminutive as she is, has the power to shriek the house down when she is insulted or crossed. Ken Cheeseman's bean pole Froth, Ethan Phillips's goofy Elbow and Tom Mardirosian's butch Pompey (in one scene he's a transvestite) cover the comedy spectrum with spirited invention. Even such minor parts as the Provost (Peter Francis James) and Escalus (Helmar Augustus Cooper) are performed with assurance and clarity.

Although the notion of regulating sexual habits in such a loose-living Caribbean society seems a bit farfetched, the theme of the play comes through strongly—that human sensuality is too powerful to be monitored by legal codes or moral restraints. The pimps, whores and lowlifes of the play know this already. They make their living by it. Angelo must learn it, after his Puritan self-control is shattered by Isabella's sexual magnetism. Braugher makes this realization a genuinely painful moment of discovery that reduces him to tears. Although he manhandles Isabella in a particularly brutal manner, fondling her breasts and grabbing her crotch, he loathes the demons that possess him.

The production is distinguished overall by very confident classical acting of this kind, but the triumph of the evening is clearly Kline's Duke. This is his most engaging performance since *A Fish Called Wanda*, and it turns especially mischievous after he returns in disguise as the Friar. Adopting a half Italian, half Polish accent (was this "papal envoy" appointed by Pope John?), he's uncertain how to make the sign of the cross. He shrives the wrong condemned man and gets mauled in a prison brawl. Vamped by an attractive whore, he can't keep his mind on his own plans. And he shocks everybody, including himself, in the final recognition scene with his abrupt proposal to Isabella ("But better time for that").

In short, this is Shakespeare with apologies to Derek Walcott and John Cleese. The text is virtually unchanged, except for the word "island" being substituted for "city" (a little more revisionist boldness might have helped disguise the anachronisms). But the spirit of carnival informs this island with noises, sounds and sweet airs that give delight and hurt not. These include a colorful casino scene, replete with mammoth Bread and Puppet-type masks, and a rousing musical finale that sends the audience home dancing. The New York Shakespeare Festival's twenty-second production of the Shakespeare Marathon is a delicious trip to a luxuriant vacation place.

Terrence McNally's new play takes us on a considerably less satisfying journey to Bombay, Banaras, Agra, the Ganges and other high points of the Indian tourist package. I'll lay odds that McNally has the same travel agent as John Guare because *A Perfect Ganesh* bears a startling resemblance to *Four Baboons Adoring the Sun*. Guare's play is about a couple of American archaeologists discovering the mystery of life under the gaze of a local Sicilian god named Eros. McNally's is about a couple of elderly women tourists learning the secrets of existence under the eye of a local Hindu god named Ganesh or Ganesha. Both plays offer to expand the spiritual horizons of emotionally starved Americans. Both are similarly underconceived and overwritten.

McNally's Ganesha is an amiable elephant-headed deity with a big Buddha belly and four arms, and we learn a lot about his genealogy through lengthy speeches and puppet shows. Although the play has spurts of wit and energy, it smells of the lamp, as if the author had developed a library pallor under his India tan. For all the research, however, McNally's Ganesha functions less as a tutelary deity than as a practical supernumerary, doubling roles. Most of his multiple parts involve portentous encounters with the two women in their quest for spiritual meaning.

For Kitty (Zoe Caldwell) and Margaret (Frances Sternhagen) are not only on vacation, they are seeking to redeem past history. Margaret feels guilty about the death of her child, who was killed crossing a street, and Kitty was cruel to her homosexual son, Walter, after his lover died of AIDS. (Walter was later beaten to death by some homophobic blacks.) Margaret does penance by keeping quiet about a tumor in her breast. Kitty hopes to atone by kissing a leper on the lips without feeling revulsion. In the climactic moment, she understands that the leper and Walter are the same person, and that "We all have a place here. Accept. Be."

As you might gather from this Buddhist sampling, *A Perfect Ganesh* represents not only the will doing the work of the imagination but Eastern mysticism doing the work of a theme. The play is a grab bag of borrowed attitudes and incidents, many of them misapplied. Kitty is continually reciting, "Oh for a Muse of fire," which she interprets "as a way saying, Savor the moment," though it is Shakespeare's celebrated apology for the limitations of the stage. The ghostly appearance of Kitty's son on the wing of a plane comes from the movie *Gremlins*. When Margaret, on a train entering a dark tunnel, feels a hand on her breast, her companion remarks, "Next we'll be having the Malabar Cave incident." There are also echoes of Tennessee Williams and others, most of them similarly identified. But while McNally is honest enough about his borrowings, his play still suffers from literary self-consciousness.

A Perfect Ganesh, in short, is a turkey stuffed with other writers' bread crumbs, and John Tillinger's production doesn't help to fatten it with meat. Caldwell, a fine classical actress, is seriously miscast as Kitty. Apparently still wearing her Lillian Hellman wig, she warbles her lines

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in a smoked stentorian voice, as if she had walked onto this stage from a much larger theater. Her tremulous enunciation is quite out of sync with the more naturalistic approach of Sternhagen, whose Margaret is played with fluttery grace and nuance. Ming Cho Lee does his best to accommodate innumerable scene changes with a sliding panel set, and Santo Loquasto dresses the characters (especially Ganesha) with color and style. But in this production, where most of the Indian population appear to be recruited from the Catskills, authenticity is not a strong point (even a memory of Guy Lombardo playing at the Westchester Country Club is underscored with a recording of Artie Shaw's "Begin the Beguine"). *A Perfect Ganesh* is a tiresome, long and aimless journey. You'd be better off exchanging your Air India tickets for a seat on CaribAir. •

Curious George

By Jacob Heilbrunn

Turmoil and Triumph: My Years as Secretary of State by George P. Shultz

(Scribner's, 1,184 pp., $30)

Ronald Reagan was not an easy man to work for. He may have believed that a return to "Cabinet government" would allow "the boys" to thrash out the issues amicably, but he ran through six national security advisers—a White House record—and his aloofness amounted to an invitation to internecine struggle. The result was that Reagan's counselors expended more energy combating each other than combating the evil empire.

Of all the advisers who vied for Reagan's ear, George Pratt Shultz is perhaps the most appealing. Like the establishment types on whom he modeled himself, Shultz conveys an impression of soundness, rectitude and probity that contrasts starkly with most of the characters who came slithering through the capital during the 1980s. Richard Nixon, Shultz's former boss, warned Reagan in an early memo, "putting it bluntly, the problem that all conservative administrations face is that those who are loyal are not bright and those who are bright are not loyal." Shultz is the exception.

Or is he? Shultz's memoirs, which chronicle his disputes with Caspar Weinberger, William Clark, Robert McFarlane and John Poindexter, beg a more equivocal judgment. Intellectually, he was no Acheson, though he easily outshone the dim bulbs flickering around Reagan. He fought tenaciously for his turf, but he rarely fought for his ideas, for his principles. He was the only senior adviser to emerge unscathed from his experience in the Reagan administration, and also from Nancy Reagan's memoirs ("George reminded me of a big teddy bear"), but he had an acute sense of the limits of independence, and he heeded his master's voice.

Far from providing the customary capstone to a distinguished career of public service, Shultz's book suggests that his loyalty and his integrity made him a curious mixture of valet and prima donna, whose admirable qualities are the source of his greatest weaknesses, whose most signal accomplishment is elevating self-preservation into a principle. He begins by declaring that he wants to take us into "the cockpit of the free world," but the aridity of his prose makes reading a much less exhilarating experience, in which the destination is rarely in sight and the monotony of the terrain induces a mild stupefaction that threatens to blunt the critical faculties. With a verisimilitude that may not have been intended, the book's march past the Siberia pipeline dispute, over the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, beyond the Iran-contra affair and alongside the rise of Gorbachev nicely reproduces the plodding pace of diplomacy.

The most valuable lesson of Shultz's memoir is that foreign policy, like warfare, consists of tedium punctuated by furious bursts of activity. Still, Shultz is after bigger game. Citing as his epigraph Isaiah Berlin's dictum that "at crucial moments, at turning points, when factors appear more or less equally balanced, chance, individuals and their decisions and acts, themselves not necessarily predictable—indeed, seldom so—can determine the course of history," Shultz intimates that he was such an individual. (Even the prideful Acheson only claimed to be "present at the creation.") Shultz's memoirs expose the vanity lurking beneath the self-effacing exterior. The mass of detail that he has collected cannot disguise the fact that finally he had a bit part in the drama. From start to finish, Reagan played the lead.

Shultz misunderstood, and so misrepresents, his role. He was hired as a capable frontman: a fixer, not a visionary. His view of politics is a businessman's view. He believes that affairs of state can be settled through negotiation, which arrives at a fair deal that the political marketplace can sustain. And, like a good businessman, Shultz was flexible; he was more than ready to bow out of the marketplace and allow events to run out of control. In the prosecution of American policy in Lebanon, Nicaragua, Iran-contra and the Soviet Union, he often threw up his hands in despair.

He now claims to have practiced what amounted to a kind of bureaucratic rope-a-dope technique, absorbing punishment to outlast his opponents. In truth, this amounted to a formula for self-serving inaction. The notion that he cannily waited for his opponents to exhaust themselves is of a piece with Shultz's larger attempt to impose coherence on a foreign policy that was largely incoherent. Though riddled with inconsistencies, Shultz's memoir offers his most sustained attempt to conceal his failure to act on his convictions. Despite his exquisite sense of injury and self-pity, Shultz offers a modified version of Reaganite boilerplate: he wishes to present himself as a managerial visionary whose stress on the "information age" allowed him to spearhead a push for democracy and free enterprise around the world.

Shultz's keen interest in business had its origins in his childhood during the Great Depression. Born in Manhattan into a middle-class family in 1920, he regularly accompanied his father to his office at the New York Stock Exchange. In 1938 George enrolled at Princeton, where he majored in economics and imbibed the local uplift. Coaching the freshman backfield, he discovered that if "I would create an environment in which everyone felt they were learning something, I would have a hot group." After a stint in the Marines, he earned a doctorate in industrial economics at MIT and went on to become dean of the business school at the University of Chicago in 1962. After Edward Levi, the president of the university, overruled Shultz's ban on loudspeakers for a student protest against the Vietnam War, Shultz tendered and then retracted the first of

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what would be a lifetime of threatened resignations. It was an early sign of his vanity, of his uncanny ability to insist on principle without ever paying a price.

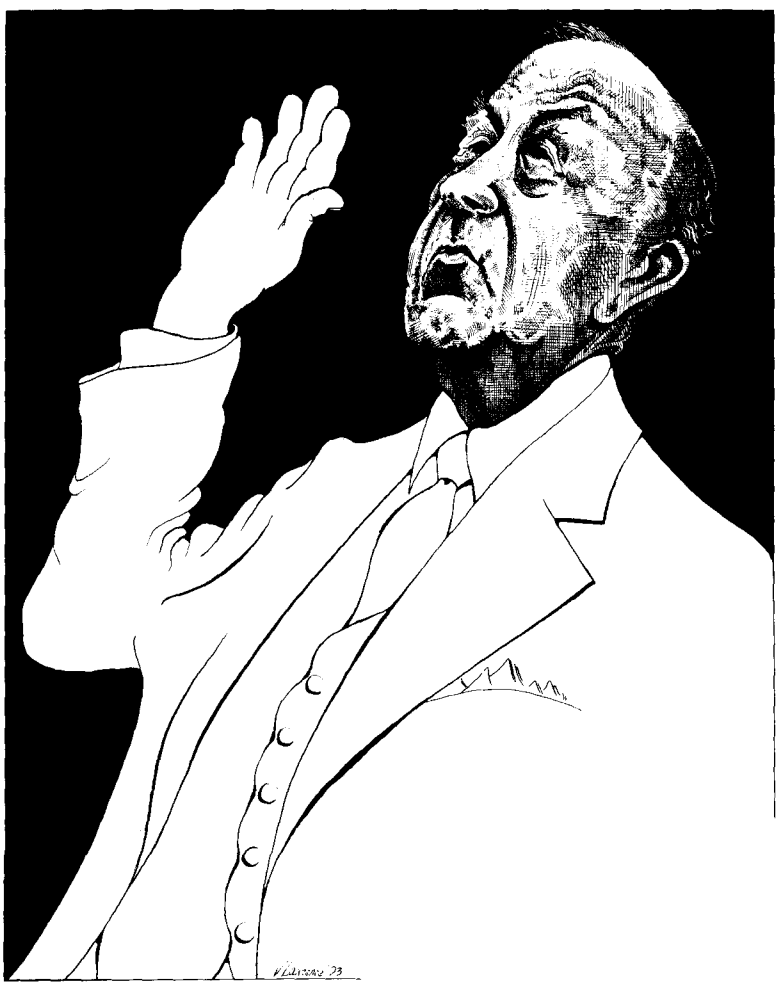
With Nixon's triumph in 1968, Shultz's political antennae began to quiver. This time he had solid grounds for leaving Chicago. Nixon furnished him with the first of three Cabinet posts. He began as secretary of labor, then became director of OMB, and then secretary of the treasury. He earned the real distinction of being dubbed a "candy ass" by Nixon for refusing to use the IRS against political enemies. Yet Shultz knew the limits of independent action. Perfectly aware of what Nixon's people at Justice were up to in the ITT affair, he watched placidly as they plied their false stories before incurious congressional overseers.

Caspar Weinberger, second in command at OMB, bridled at Shultz's penchant for drawn out negotiations; but with Weinberger himself Shultz could be insultingly curt. Their antagonism carried over to the Bechtel Corporation, where Shultz rose to become president in 1975 and Weinberger general counsel. While Weinberger's aggressive style antagonized the company's board, Shultz's fondness for martinis and the golf course made him seem supremely "clubbable." (Steven Bechtel, Jr. invited Shultz to join the Bohemian Club and saw to it that he was appointed to an array of corporate boards.) It was not long before the simmering feud between Weinberger and Shultz came to a boil in the White House.

In 1980 Reagan had toyed with the notion of appointing Shultz secretary of state, but Weinberger got his revenge by convincing Reagan that two Cabinet officers from Bechtel would be excessive. In June 1982, when Alexander Haig's self-promotion and difficulties with the Reaganites forced the president to sack him—no mean feat given Reagan's distaste for firing subordinates—Shultz finally came on board. Still, Weinberger, a veteran of Reagan's gubernatorial staff, had the closer relationship with Reagan. He was like a member of the family, which was crucial for a president who saw politics as an expression of personalities and personal loyalties.

Shultz came into office determined to avoid any intrusions from Weinberger on his turf. When Weinberger began to undercut Shultz, he went to Reagan and told him, "You don't need a guy like me for secretary of state if this is the way things are going to be done." Shultz won walk-in privileges from Reagan, but the episode is symptomatic of Shultz's inflation of his toughness; Weinberger's intrusions lasted as long as Weinberger remained in the administration. The sparring with Weinberger also reveals Shultz's penchant for high-minded statements unsupported by concrete action. In 1984, for example, he engaged Weinberger in a protracted and bitter public dispute over the use of force, declaring that the United States could not become the "Hamlet of nations," fretting over when to exert its power. Weinberger's reluctance to apply force, writes Shultz in his memoir, was "the Vietnam syndrome in spades, carried to an absurd level, and a complete abdication of leadership"; and he cites the bombing of Libya and the invasion of Grenada as part of a comprehensive policy of using force, particularly against terrorism. Yet in publicly debating Weinberger, Shultz was confusing a pronouncement with a policy. The revelation of the arms deals with Iran exposed Reagan's use of force against Libya as an isolated, exceptional act in the struggle against terrorism.

Shultz contends that "this massive, secret White House operation was totally contrary to the long-standing policy that Ronald Reagan and I had constructed to deal with terrorists." He is deceiving himself. He had constructed no such policy with the president. Indeed, Shultz's initial forays into Middle Eastern politics set the stage for the hostage crises and demonstrate that precisely the opposite of a coherent perspective guided Reagan foreign policy. With the withdrawal of the PLO from Lebanon in August 1982, Reagan launched what became known as the "Reagan Plan" for Middle East peace. On September 1 he announced the plan, devised by Shultz, calling for Palestinian self-rule tied to an economic association with Jordan. King Hussein's refusal to accede to such a proposal quickly scuttled the plan. The Israelis also rejected the plan immediately. Shultz dropped the proposal like a hot potato; and not until Arafat offered his recognition of Israel in December 1988 did Shultz actively inject himself into the "peace process" again.



GEORGE SHULTZ BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Lebanon provides an even more egregious example of Shultz's method of operating, of a mentality that guaranteed fractious fighting among the Pentagon, the National Security Council and the State Department. Shultz's unwavering support for intervention in Lebanon prompted him to misuse the intelligence process and to attempt to undercut Weinberger, and it ended up aggrandizing national security adviser Robert McFarlane's power. Lebanon, indeed, is a textbook case of Shultz's skill at shirking responsibility and pushing the blame for disasters onto his associates.

When Shultz replaced Haig in June

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1982, the Israelis were on the verge of moving into Lebanon to smash the PLO in its lair. The Americans averted the Israeli action and arranged for 15,000 PLO troops to depart Beirut. For Shultz, the lesson was that "I could see how ready everyone was for diplomatic engagement by the United States and for a U.S. diplomatic success." He seems not to understand that what prompted the PLO to abandon Lebanon was the Israelis' military advantage, coupled with the refusal of the Arab states to throw their forces into the fray.

Shultz succeeded in cobbling together the Israel-Lebanon agreement of May 17, 1983, which normalized relations between the two countries. But the agreement was a dead letter before the ink was dry. Shultz never acknowledged that there was no longer a "Lebanon," apart from the welter of parties and sects striving to annihilate each other. For once Weinberger could justifiably gloat that "George thought [the agreement] was the greatest thing since sliced bread. It was nothing, not even an agreement." And Shultz's greater failure was his refusal to acknowledge Hafez Assad's designs for a Greater Syria. Together with McFarlane, he repeatedly ignored the warnings of the CIA and the State Department that stationing troops in Lebanon as a peacekeeping force would present "intractable" problems, and he dismissed reports stating that Syria would scuttle the treaty. This, from an administration whose boast was that it recognized that the world is a dangerous place!

Assad's designs were not exactly a secret. Throughout 1983, he smuggled men and matériel into Lebanon, enabling the bombing of the American Embassy on Beirut's waterfront on April 18. When Druze forces attacked the Lebanese army at Suk al Garb on September 10, Shultz and McFarlane persuaded Reagan to launch retaliatory air and artillery strikes. American military doctrine has always favored bombing in place of committing ground troops, but the results have rarely lived up to expectations, and here they had the opposite of the intended effect. The bombing destroyed the notion that the Marines stationed in Lebanon, whose mission had never been defined, were a neutral force. On October 23 a suicide bomber crashed into the Marine barracks and killed 241 men.

Shultz fought grimly with McFarlane over whether to remain in Lebanon. He declares that the goal of a stable Lebanon justified the risks and was a precondition for peace in the Middle East. This was wishful thinking. The best that he can now offer is the pious statement that "the experience left me more determined, if more patient and careful, to work for peace and stability in this most volatile of regions." Certainly Weinberger's rules of engagement—which prohibited even loaded rifles!—crippled the ability of the Marines to defend themselves; and Shultz is on solid ground in complaining that the "Pentagon restricted our Marines to a passive, tentative, and ... inward-looking role in Beirut.... The crucial combination of strength and diplomacy was not available." But Shultz, too, shares the blame for the deadlock in reaching decisions, which prompted McFarlane to strike out on his own and the president to circumvent the Pentagon by relying on the NSC. Neither Shultz nor Weinberger made a real attempt to overcome their bickering and change the policy.

Shultz's failure to coordinate his actions with Weinberger carried over into the Iran-contra affair. Had they joined forces, Reagan would likely have been compelled to desist. But this they would not do. In fact, Iran-contra was an extension of the insouciance with which the United States wandered into Lebanon. For a start, the hostages were captured in revenge for the bombing of Lebanon that Shultz had pushed for. And once again McFarlane ignored

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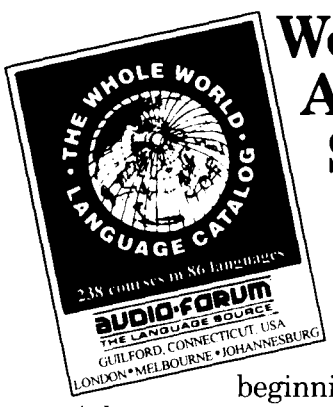

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intelligence reports that did not comport with his immediate objectives and employed bureaucratic legerdemain to cut out State and the Pentagon.

There was a further continuity between Lebanon and Iran-contra that Shultz will not accept. By supporting overtures to Iraq during the mid-1980s, he had lent credibility to the attempts to deal with the Iranians. Since both were known supporters of terrorism, a kind of moral equivalence, or immoral equivalence, was established between the two countries. In one of the few statements in Oliver North's memoir that ring true, the colonel tells us that "the American tilt toward Iraq and antipathy toward Iran were two of the few things that Shultz and Weinberger ever agreed on." Shultz in particular was an exponent of close ties with Saddam. He never asked the question, Can you trust this man? In Shultz's memoir, one can still detect the attitudes that encouraged Saddam's belief that he could get away with gobbling up Kuwait: "The fact remained that a radical Iran now posed an immediate threat to the strategic Gulf area, and Iraq was the only military machine that could block the path of Khomeini's Iran."

Thus Shultz helped set the stage for Iran-contra, but he attempts to absolve himself and the president of any responsibility. He fails to acknowledge that the Iran scheme fit Reagan's style of government perfectly. In what becomes an almost reflexive maneuver in his memoir, Shultz tries to portray Reagan as a man who wanted to heed Shultz's advice but was trapped by his right-wing advisers. Shultz likes to have it both ways. He observes that "Ronald Reagan felt a deep sense of personal responsibility for the fate of those seven unfortunate Americans" and announces that "ultimately, the guy behind it, who got it going, and the only guy who can stop it, was and is Ronald Reagan"—and then he depicts Reagan as a nitwit: "President Reagan did not seem to grasp what was going on."

In relying on North and Poindexter, however, Reagan was, in effect, running an entrepreneurial foreign policy, handing out broad directives to his aggressive lieutenants and expecting them to be implemented with competitive zeal. Given the internecine conflicts among State, Defense and the NSC, it was the kind of foreign policy that seemed to promise quick results. Reagan encouraged operatives to dun everyone from elderly widows to sultans for donations to the contras, and remained aloof to the details. He opened a window of opportunity for these policy entrepreneurs, but he made no provisions for a safety net.

Where was George? In his own view, he was doing the right thing, Saint George tilting at the North-McFarlane-Poindexter dragon, but the "snake never died, no matter how many times I hacked at it." Hacked? Flailed is more like it. As the Tower Commission reported, Shultz washed his hands of the affair: "Secretary Shultz specifically requested to be informed only as necessary to perform his job." He told Poindexter that he did not wish to know the "operational details." Shultz only breathed fire when his perks were jeopardized; he once threatened to resign when a White House aide attempted to stop him from using an Air Force plane to travel to a Stanford football game.

Nor was Shultz entirely innocent of the wider ramifications of the hostage deals. He never mentions that he originally solicited $10 million from the Sultan of Brunei for the contras, which his subordinate Elliott Abrams fatefully and hilariously deposited in the wrong Swiss bank account, leading to the unraveling of the whole affair. The most that Shultz could say at the time about the assistant secretary's actions—which included lying to Congress—was that Abrams was "a very able, energetic fine person ... the country needs people like that ... he is good, really good."

Shultz did not fail to take a tough line with Reagan once the affair became public. But the contrast between Shultz's passivity during the affair and his outrage after its exposure suggests that he plunged back into the thick of things when he saw an opportunity to burnish his image. And so he implored Reagan in November 1986 to end all dealings with the Iranians. Reagan responded by telling him, in Shultz's words, to "get off my back." Shultz reveals that Reagan went out of his way to antagonize him by floating the idea of inviting General Pinochet for a state visit as a gesture to the hard right; and William Casey even tried to engineer Shultz's ouster. But the conservatives had shot their bolt. By talking to Reagan with the "'bark off' all the way," and with the assistance of a panic-stricken Nancy Reagan, Shultz convinced the president that he had to acknowledge responsibility. And so, at the last minute, Shultz could credibly pose as the rescuer of the Reagan presidency.

In Central American policy, too, Shultz posed as the sober figure of the administration. He made a few half-hearted stabs at polishing the image of human rights violators. In El Salvador, for example, where recently declassified government documents show that the State Department deliberately covered up human rights violations in its reports to Congress, he recounts in rather mealy-mouthed fashion that "we were constantly struggling with an excruciating dilemma: on the one hand, we could point to progress; on the other hand, there were still great and disturbing problems." For Shultz, however, the most disturbing problem was that he was kept out of the loop on Central American matters.

Though the humiliations heaped on him by the right incensed him, there is no real sign that Shultz took much of an interest in Central America. As in Iran-contra, turf mattered more to him than policy. His survey of the region is cursory in the extreme, and studded with faint and obligatory nods to the importance of the contras as a diplomatic tool to apply pressure on the Sandinistas. There is something rather pat about his statement that "I supported the contras, but as a source of pressure to further our true objectives: democracy in Nicaragua and peace in Central America. The contras could then safely and effectively be able to take part in the political process." This was not, after all, the rationale of the administration, which spoke of the contras much more grandiosely.

Was the right's staunch support for the contras vindicated by the election of 1989, which threw the Sandinistas out of office? Or could the same result have been achieved without plunging Nicaragua into a bloody civil war from which it has yet to recover? Shultz does not say. Instead, he closes his discussion of Latin America with a paean to the free market. In Chile, we are told, the Chicago school of economics effected a transition to democracy: "Like Ferdinand Marcos before him, Pinochet was one more dictator fooled by the power of the electoral process, a difficult process to rig in the knowledge and information age." This faith in the "information age" is an economist's reductionism, according to which the market is the engine of historical change. In depicting the Reagan administration as supporting an inexorable tide toward democracy fueled by the free market, however, Shultz is imposing an artificial unity on the foreign policy of the Reagan era. It is something of a fantasy.

Again Shultz cannot resist having it both ways. He trumpets an illusory "Reagan Doctrine" championing freedom and human rights, and he makes the astonishing admission that Reagan lost his trust in him because of his support for the ouster of Marcos in February

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1986. According to Shultz, "Our paths had started to diverge with the fall of Marcos, to which President Reagan was never really reconciled." (By February 1986 Reagan had already cut Shultz and Weinberger out of the Iran-contra dealings.) Reagan could not countenance the toppling of any dictator, however corrupt and brutal, who was anti-Soviet and pro-American. His resistance to "people power" in the Philippines gives the lie to Shultz's attempt to claim credit for a consistent Reagan foreign policy aimed at extending democracy. The irony is that, as Shultz acknowledges, the upheaval in the Phillipines was surely a precursor of the democratic revolutions of 1989 for which Reagan and Bush take credit.

These contradictions don't interest Shultz. Nowhere does he argue more tenaciously for the importance of the "information age" and the Reagan-inspired transition to democracy than in the case of the Soviet Union. His depiction of his dealings with the Kremlin typifies his search for a self-vindicating transcendent moment. A tenacious negotiator, Shultz was very good at cutting deals. This was a virtue when the management of the details was at stake, and it helped him steer Reagan toward the INF treaty and summits with Gorbachev. Shultz had a thankless task in directing the president. His private discussions with Reagan, says Shultz, were "essential to conditioning him, and myself, for the work to come. I frequently heard him repeat back to me or someone else ideas or bits of information from these sessions." Unlike the hard-liners, Shultz's emphasis on economics predisposed him to recognize the significance of Gorbachev and the faltering economy. What is more, Soviet thinking was converging with Western theories of nuclear war—toward the belief that the "scientific-technical revolution" had severed the link between war and revolution.

Shultz's accomplishments were more modest than he will allow. Until 1987, Weinberger's opposition to any arms-control deals stymied Shultz's efforts to strike a deal with the Kremlin. Above all, Shultz's gross exaggerations of his role during the cold war, his attempt to depict himself as a crusader single-handedly converting the Soviet Union into a Whiggish trading democracy by warning Gorbachev that a capitalist democratic revolution was sweeping the globe, indicate that he failed to understand the true sources of Soviet decline. Economics played a part, certainly; but it was hardly the sole factor.

Personalities also played a crucial role in the end of the cold war, and one of the most important personalities, of course, was Reagan. Shultz's own account of Reagan shows that the president was more flexible than his advisers. He also shows that Reagan was impelled by contradictory impulses: he backed a financially crippling arms buildup that became an end in itself, to be used in apocalyptic circumstances too frightening to contemplate; and he was determined, like Shultz, to work with the Soviet leadership. Shultz reports that Reagan told him, during the INF crisis of 1982-83, that "if things get hotter and hotter and arms control becomes an issue maybe I should go to see Andropov and propose eliminating all nuclear weapons."

The key man on the American side, in sum, was the president. Relations with the Soviet Union depended on Reagan's stance. Shultz's views of economic interdependence were not nearly as significant as Reagan's views of nuclear war and the Soviet Union. Shultz, who offers a sanitized portrait, never mentions that Reagan's utopianism had roots in religious fundamentalism and science fiction. Reagan was influenced by religious tracts such as Hal Lindsay's *The Late Great Planet Earth*, and he believed that he had been anointed to avert the nuclear Armageddon.

Reagan's fear of nuclear war resulted, in March 1983, in his startling speech on SDI. This somersault on nuclear strategy did not sit well with Shultz, but he manfully pulled himself into line: "I could see the depths of his feelings about this issue, his abhorrence of reliance on the ability to 'wipe each other out' as the means of deterring war, and, of course, I could agree that if we could learn how to defend ourselves that would be wonderful." Not until the promulgation of SDI did Gorbachev and his advisers begin to rethink the relationship between nuclear parity and stability. Thus Shultz thinks that SDI was a marvelous negotiating chip.

But the chip was never cashed in. For Reagan, SDI was never a bargaining chip for the purpose of arms control, it was always an end in itself. It would bring world peace. Shultz's squirming about these embarrassing distinctions is transparent in his treatment of the summit at Reykjavik. He writes that he was on Reagan's wavelength: "I had never learned to love the bomb—or the ballistic missile that carried it." Now, claiming that Reykjavik was "a stupendous success," he declares in a key passage that

> what happened at Reykjavik seemed almost too much for people to absorb, precisely because it was outside the bounds of

Technology Policy

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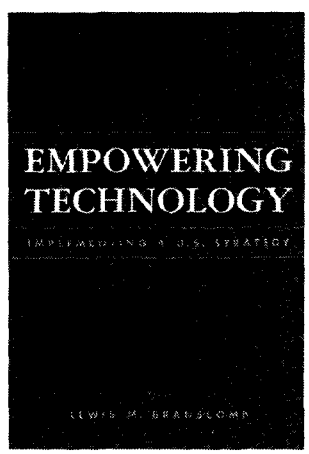

Technology policy — whether we should have one and what form such a policy should take — was a core issue of the 1992 presidential campaign, and in February 1993 the Clinton administration confirmed that fostering new technologies will be a critical part of its agenda for redirecting the American economy. To help orient the inevitable debates on this agenda, experts from Harvard's Center for Science and International Affairs here examine a set of key issues and problems that, taken together, define the scope and limits of such a policy.

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the conventional wisdom.... Reagan's presidency was turning out to be the most radical since FDR's.... We were on the verge of eliminating intermediate-range nuclear weapons in Europe—perhaps everywhere—and we were even contemplating the notion of a world without nuclear weapons.

This was ridiculous then, and it is ridiculous now. Had Gorbachev accepted Reagan's offer to scrap all nuclear weapons, the Atlantic alliance would have been destroyed. According to Don Oberdorfer in *The Turn*, Shultz contended after the summit that "I really felt that he's the president ... who am I to stop him saying what he believes?" As in Iran-contra, he washed his hands of a near disaster; but again, in his memoir, he jumps back in to seize the credit, to transform turmoil into triumph.

Not that the Reagan administration suffered anything like a string of setbacks in Soviet relations. On the contrary, it presided over the signing of the INF treaty and prompted the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in April 1988, which was one of the proximate causes of the unraveling of the empire. Shultz's role in those successes, however, is a murky matter. For all their faults, and they were legion, the conservatives bent on toppling the Soviet Union were in earnest; the cantankerous Casey entered the CIA declaring, "I'm looking for a place to start rolling back the Soviet empire," and later found it in Afghanistan. Shultz, by contrast, devoted most of his energies to persuading Gorbachev that the "information age" made it imperative for the Soviet Union to modernize its economy. Shultz tells us, for instance, that Gorbachev's speech before the United Nations in which he declared that "the world economy is becoming a single organism" revealed that "he had taken on board the vast implications of the information age." Shultz's obsession with a putative "information age" uncannily resembles Marx's claim in *The Communist Manifesto* that there is a "universal interdependence of nations. The intellectual creations of individual nations become common property." Shultz had no master plan for toppling communism; he was, to the end, a professor of economics.

Shultz's *Turmoil and Triumph* echoes Churchill's *Triumph and Tragedy*, but a sense of tragedy is precisely what is missing from his boyishly optimistic book. An oddly innocent, starry-eyed enthusiasm pervades the pages of his memoir, lending them an opaque tone. With his managerial utopianism, Shultz views the running of a classroom, a corporation and the State Department as requiring the same bag of tools. In his discussion of Central America or the Middle East or the Soviet Union, he does not appear as a secretary of state grappling with the political and human costs of foreign policy. The more that this proud man attempts to take the credit for ushering in a new age, the smaller and smaller his contribution begins to appear.

JACOB HEILBRUNN is a University fellow at the Center for German and European Studies, Georgetown University.

A Passage to India

BY CLIFFORD GEERTZ

In an Antique Land by Amitav Ghosh

(Knopf, 393 pp., $23)

The world, by now, is fairly well cut up into distinct pieces, stretches of space with borders around them and inhabitants within them. People move about a good deal, and some may change their residence and become inhabitants of some other piece. Nor are the pieces themselves entirely fixed; they can merge, divide, swallow one another up, or, like the Soviet Union, just disappear. But all of this occurs against the background of the peculiar idea that all individuals, however drifting, belong somewhere, to some bounded territory housing some population, even if they may have to be deported or walled in before they will live there.

One part of the globe where this conception of social and geographical interconnection was never very strong, however, is that great strip of mercantile civilization that, from about the tenth century to the sixteenth century, ran from Fez and Seville in the West, through Cairo and Aden around the Red Sea, across the Indian Ocean to Calicut and the Malabar coast. In this mobile, polyglot and virtually borderless region, which no one owned and no one dominated, Arabs, Jews, Iberians, Greeks, Indians, various sorts of Italians and Africans pursued trade and learning, private lives and public fortunes, bumping up against one another and against various sorts of political adventurers, but more or less getting along, or getting by, within broad and general rules for communication, propriety and the conduct of business. It was, we might say, a multicultural bazaar.

Today this part of the world is divided, like the rest of the globe, into singular and separated national states, a number of them at each other's throats. But, in part because the division is so recent, in part because it was to such an extent imported from outside by imperial powers, the echoes of the cosmopolitan past remain perceptible—faint, perhaps, but persistent. The sense of the artificiality of borders, and even of the religious and racial distinctions most emphatically insisted upon by the ideologically inflamed, still lingers in the popular mind. Footloose mobility and multiple connection, the setting aside of cultural differences in streetcorner negotiations, the freedom to truck, barter and exchange with anyone who is up for it, continue to attract, however overridden they may be by immediate passions. An area that has become the very image of parochial conflict retains, almost as a sort of background energy left over from its creation, the traces and the intimations of a much less constricted form of life.

It is into this equivocal world, an "elusive and mysterious antique land," that Amitav Ghosh, a young novelist and anthropologist, born in Calcutta and trained in New Delhi, Oxford and Alexandria, dropped himself in the early '80s in an attempt to gain some understanding not merely of it, but also, for reasons that never become altogether clear, of his own relationship to it. His way into this region was by means of his discovery, in a collection of commercial letters edited by S. D. Goitein, the great scholar of the period, of the existence of an Indian slave in twelfth-century Egypt.

The slave, about whom virtually nothing is known save his name—it was "Bomma"—and his position—he was his owner's "business agent"—belonged to a Jewish merchant installed for the moment in Mangalore on the Malabar coast. He is mentioned in a letter written

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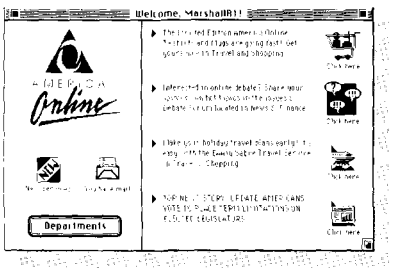

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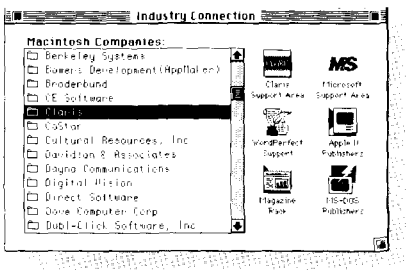

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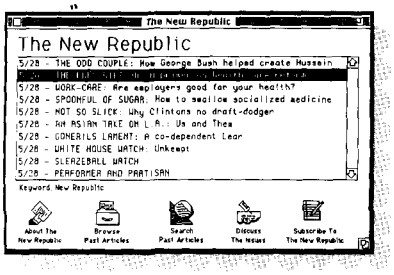
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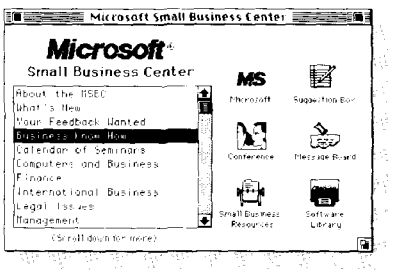

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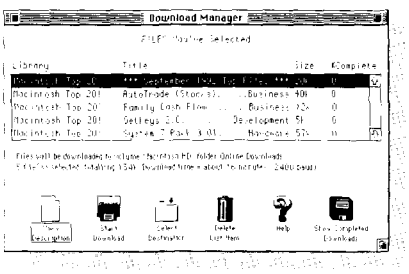

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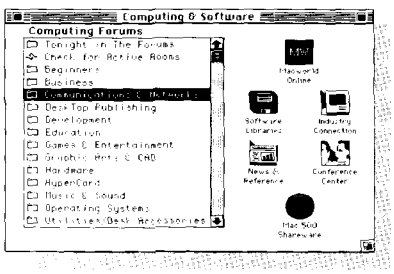

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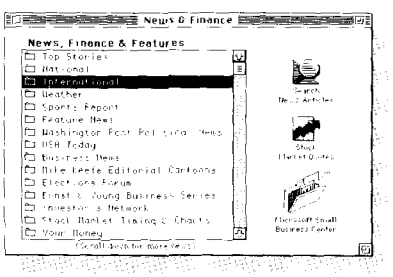

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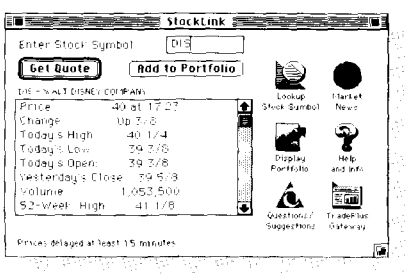

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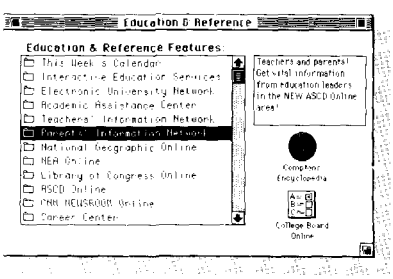

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by the merchant's patron back in Aden who, somewhat surprisingly, sends the slave his personal greetings. This discovery, made in an Oxford library while thrashing about for a thesis subject, not only determined Ghosh to go to Egypt for his fieldwork, it also necessitated his doing so: it saddled him with a vocation. "The next year ... I was in a village ... a couple hours to the southeast of Alexandria. I knew nothing then about the slave except he had given me a right to be there, a sense of entitlement."

The book that Ghosh writes about this experience, or study, or adventure, or quest, weaves back and forth between the immediate realities encountered in his village and in another village down the road to which he later moved, and his search through the documentary record in England, North Africa, Princeton and Philadelphia for, if not the person of Bomma, which proved largely unrecoverable, then for whatever he could discover of the life immediately surrounding him—that of his owner and his owner's relatives, rivals and associates.

The ethnographic side of things, the description of village life (Ghosh was there in 1980-81 and 1988-89, returning briefly in 1990 at the outbreak of the Gulf war), consists in a series of detached vignettes, strung together, as indeed a novelist, or anyway an impressionistic novelist, would string them together, to characterize a mood rather than to analyze a state of affairs. There is his "profoundly unlovable" landlord, fat, miserly, immobile all day on his veranda divan watching everything that passes, elaborating intricate schemes to protect his wealth. There is his dignified, recently widowed neighbor, an upright paterfamilias, proud of his sons and grandsons, just remarried to a girl a fraction of his age. There is a learned scholar, pious and political, and baffled by Hinduism, "this 'Hinduki' thing." There are young blades restive under the constraints of village life, arrogant policemen randomly throwing their weight around, reformist religious teachers hopelessly inveighing against local superstitions, traditionalist mullahs enamored of modern armaments but hostile to everything else in any way strange.

The picture is one of an extremely agitated standing still; of a kinetic society that doesn't much move. But if the society doesn't move, a fair number of its people do—mainly to Iraq, where jobs are available and the money is good. When Ghosh returns for his second stay in 1988, most of those he had known as impatient young men seven years earlier are gone:

> There had always been a fair number of people working "outside" ... but now it was different; it was as though half the working population had taken leave of the land and surged into Iraq.
>
> The flow had started in the early 1980s, a couple of years after the beginning of the war between Iraq and Iran; by then Iraq's own men were all tied up on one front or another ... and it was desperately in need of labor to sustain its economy. For several years around that time it had been very easy for an Egyptian to find a job there; recruiters and contractors had gone from village to village looking for young men who were willing to work "outside." People had left in truckloads; it was said at one time that there were maybe 2 or 3 million Egyptian workers in Iraq, as much as a sixth of that country's population. It was as if the two nations had dissolved into each other.

Not for very long, of course. After the end of the war with Iran, the Iraqis wanted the jobs back. Instead of encouraging foreigners to come, they began to drive them out. With the Gulf war, the break was complete; the exodus a flood. Most of the migrants drifted back, changing things a bit materially (televisions, refrigerators, washing machines), but more or less returning to what they had left: energy and restlessness locked in place.

Ghosh's pursuit of intelligence about his twelfth-century second self, that offstage slave, is much less straightforward. Interleaved in his narrative with the quick-sketch reports of his village encounters, it is a wandering, parabolical tale, derived from searching for incidental references and uncertain clues in documents difficult to find, difficult to read and even more difficult to interpret. If his modern Egypt is concentrated and brightly lit, his medieval Egypt is scattered and hard to see.

The documents concerned are those recovered from the famous Geniza of old Cairo. A geniza is a storehouse in which the members of a synagogue entomb virtually every scrap of writing so as to avoid desecrating the name of God. The Cairo Geniza was opened up to Western scholarship at the end of the nineteenth century and its contents progressively removed, colonial style, to Britain, Russia, Palestine and the United States. It contained 800 years of everything from ship invoices and divorce settlements to medical treatises and biblical texts. It is on these materials that Goitein based *A Mediterranean Society*, his magnificent synthesis of medieval society in the region, one of the most considerable historical works of our time.

It is to these materials that Ghosh looks for traces of his Bomma, for the slave's owner, a certain Abraham Ben Yiju, was (like Maimonides) a member of the congregation to which the Geniza belonged. He doesn't find all that much, and what he does find has more to do with Ben Yiju than with Bomma. Ben Yiju was born in what is now Tunisia to a merchant family engaged in the eastern trade. He moved to Cairo, and thence to Aden, the Red Sea port, in the 1120s. There, "well enough educated to have become a scholar himself and ... very well versed in doctrinal matters," he entered the circle of some of "the most well-traveled men of the Middle Ages, perhaps of any age before the twentieth century ... witness to a pattern of movement so fluent and far-ranging that they make the journeys of later medieval travelers, such as Marco Polo and Ibn Battuta, seem unremarkable in comparison."

Apparently Ben Yiju got into some sort of trouble—Ghosh imagines a blood feud—and fled, after about a decade, to Mangalore, a small port on the Malabar coast. He remained there for eighteen years, amassing a fortune and dispatching Bomma to Aden to prosecute his affairs as the occasion warranted, which seems to have been often. He married another of his slaves, an Indian woman he manumitted and converted to Judaism, and had a number of children by her. Eventually the trouble in Aden was regulated, and he returned with his wife and his family, and with Bomma, to the Red Sea area, where they spent the remainder of their days, moving about and struggling as ever to keep an itinerant life in workable order.

It is this sort of life that Ghosh wishes to place in counterpoint to the different yet reminiscent one that he found in the villages around Alexandria, in order to give the past a continuing reality and the present a resonant depth. (He even journeys to Mangalore, to get a feel for what "it must have been like" for Bomma and Ben Yiju and Ben Yiju's wife to live there amid Yemenis, Persians, Sumatrans and Chinese, all of them surrounded by Malabar fishermen, and also to get a feel for how it now looks—bustling and built-up—to the modern eye.) In this he succeeds well enough. He has produced an original, moving and suggestive work; well researched, carefully constructed and beautifully written.

Yet, perhaps because his natural reticence, his wish to stay apart and self-possessed, prevents him from examining very closely or very deeply his personal investment in the figure of Bomma, what

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it is, exactly, that draws him with such force to this near invisible presence so far back in time in so distant a setting, his book has a sense of incompletion about it; of something not said about then, and, even more, about now. It tells its stories, it constructs its ironies, and it leaves it at that.

CLIFFORD GEERTZ is professor of social science at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton University.

The South and the Fury

BY C. VANN WOODWARD

William Faulkner and Southern History by Joel Williamson

(Oxford University Press, 509 pp., $35)

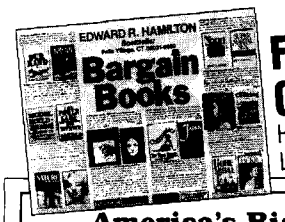
If the comparison is not carried too far, William Faulkner's relation to the South resembles James Joyce's relation to Ireland. For each of them, his native culture, tradition and history provided the subject matter of his fiction. For Joyce, that was true of all his great works. As for Faulkner, fourteen of his nineteen novels, including all the great ones, center on one mythic county of his native state, and the others (but for one), on other parts of the lower South. Both men were conscious of the provinciality of their culture and of its subordinate relation to a dominant one. Neither of them romanticized it, but both were insistent (Joyce less so) on the distinctiveness of the culture that was their own. In Faulkner's case it seemed to justify the publication of a large *Glossary of Faulkner's South*, with thousands of words—such as "shikepoke" and "laplink"—to assist not only his foreign readers but also non-Southerners whose native language was English.

Other comparisons, however, seem less helpful. Joyce left Ireland as a youth and remained an exile the rest of his life. Faulkner stayed rooted in Mississippi, save for stints in Hollywood to stave off bankruptcy, a few brief trips abroad and a self-dramatized residence in Virginia toward the end. And yet both Faulkner the homebody and Joyce the exile continued to nurture powerful if contradictory emotions about "home": love and hate, devotion and dismay, loyalty and shame. Unlike his American contemporaries—Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Lewis and others of the "lost generation"—Faulkner never threw off the bonds of family, clan, proliferating relatives and community. His obstinate withdrawal into provincial Oxford, where he did nearly all his writing, could be attributed to failure until his writings eventually made him world famous.

With the coming of fame, the mysteries and the paradoxes of the writer and his writings demanded and received more explanations, some wildly contradictory, while new Faulkner puzzles and enigmas kept appearing. Why, for example, was recognition so slow in coming? His greatest novels appeared between 1929 and 1936, and yet by 1945 all seventeen of his books (except *Sanctuary*) were out of print. Commenting on his Nobel Prize in 1950, *The New York Times* complained that his South was "too often vicious, depraved, decadent, corrupt," and added primly that "incest and rape may be common pastimes in Faulkner's 'Jefferson, Miss.' but they are not elsewhere in the United States."

The important break for Faulkner's reputation in the United States came with Malcolm Cowley's publication of *The Portable Faulkner* in 1946. Then the literary editor of THE NEW REPUBLIC, Cowley had already conceded that "there is no other American writer who has been so consistently misrepresented by his critics, including myself." In the introduction to his selections in 1946, Cowley spoke of Faulkner as "an epic or bardic poet in prose." And higher praise was still to come from reputable American critics. The question yet to be answered satisfactorily was why the Mississippian's stature was appreciated widely abroad before it was at home. At the peak of his anti-Americanism, Sartre declared Faulkner to be a god for French youth; and Faulkner already had a devoted public in Italy and Japan.

More and more unanswered questions piled up. How was one to reconcile the life of the writer with his achievement? A seventh-grade dropout, Faulkner was virtually without formal education, and well along in his youth without a penny or a job. A furious worker, he also became a



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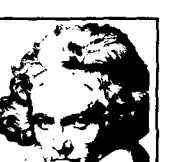

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pathological drinker, a consumer of bootleg booze in huge quantities over incredible spells and with disastrous results. Periodically confined to institutions to dry out, he eventually died in one. His wife, Estelle, shared his addiction, which was more a consequence than a cause of their unhappy and tumultuous marriage, as were her attempts at suicide. Yet they stuck it out to the end, despite the long succession of his attractive young women lovers with literary ambitions, whose letters Estelle sometimes intercepted.

A family man in more than the nuclear way, Faulkner also stuck to (or was stuck with) an extended family of as many generations of relatives as happened to be around at a given time, along with proliferating nieces, nephews, in-laws and first, second and third cousins once, twice or thrice removed. Many of them, along with "connections" black and white, became his dependents, and he went to any length to help them out, to bail them out or bury them decently when he could earn, beg or borrow the money. This helps to explain why he was so often near bankruptcy, no matter how many Hollywood bonanzas, literary prizes or publishers advances came his way.

No explanation is adequate for some eccentricities—for example, the personas that he adopted, elaborated and clung to. Consider only two of them. The first involved his career in the Royal Air Force toward the end of World War I. Passing himself off as a British subject (with the appropriate accent), he enlisted in Toronto and returned to Oxford after a few months in an RAF officer's uniform and insignia (unearned), with stories of being shot down over France and patched up with a silver plate in his skull—all without leaving the ground. (Later he did learn to fly after a fashion, threatening his own life and that of others.) Much later he took on the role of the Virginia aristocrat, huntsman and horseman, complete with fancy riding pants, scarlet jacket, black boots and top hat. He was described by a friend as a "terrible" rider, and the smashed vertebrae and shattered bones that he sustained from many frightful falls were not imaginary.

Problems of the sort already suggested were enough to keep battalions of scholars busy for years, but there remained the more important questions of interpretation: how to read what Faulkner wrote, and how to correct misinterpretations of it. What was he trying to tell us about the South, old and new? As one of his own characters put it, "*What do they do there. Why do they live there. Why do they live at all*"? Was he selling us another romance in the guise of degeneration: the decline and fall of the old regime? Was he a racist in sheep's clothing? A cryptofascist? Or was he really speaking, as in his Nobel Prize address, of the human condition and its tragedy, of "the human heart in conflict with itself," whether in Yoknapatawpha County or anywhere else in the world? Of the award, he said in his address that it was "made to me not as a man, but to my work—a life's work in the agony and sweat of the human spirit." But that work *was* about the South, about people living in its unique culture. Was it a new reading of Southern history?

Challenged by such questions, scholars filled the learned journals with articles and the shelves with books. For twenty or so years after his death, more was written about Faulkner and his works than about any other American novelist, living or dead. It rivaled the space traditionally accorded to British classics by American academic and literary critics. After such a deluge, could there be anything of importance left to be said about the subject?

Joel Williamson offers persuasive evidence, I think, that there are indeed some deeper understandings possible, and that historians are capable of adding insights to literary criticism. His book is primarily biographical, yet he would admit that for full and detailed information we must still depend heavily on the work of Joseph Blotner—his two-volume, 2,000-page biography and the one-volume edition less than half that length. Williamson calls Blotner's accomplishment "vast and excellent labor," adding that the biographer's relations with the Faulkners became "deeply personal"; Faulkner spoke of him as "my spiritual son."

Although the largest part of Williamson's book is titled "Biography," this section is almost as much a study of the writings as the part officially devoted to the work. His argument is that the story of the Faulkner clan and the novelist's Mississippi forebears, maternal as well as paternal, was "in effect, the real Yoknapatawpha County, the culture that made William Faulkner." That is not to say it made Faulkner's fiction: rather that it was the legend and reality on which he drew for the making of his fiction. Relating the one to the other, Williamson puts to rest the attempts to find in fact or fiction any reason for endowing Faulkner with an Old South background of planter aristocrats. Instead both the forebears and the novels embody a South far more complex in varieties, classes and styles of life. In addition to the Compsons and the Sartorises, there were the McCaslins and the Snopses, plus a memorable cast of black characters. They all existed in a culture with mixtures of class and race, violence and brutality, rascality and integrity.

Williamson begins with ancestry, 138 pages of it, dug out of county courthouse records, unpublished census data and a dozen archives, "gold mines of information." To offer a sample of the treasures: the first Mississippi Falkner (so spelled then) was William C. Falkner, the novelist's great-grandfather. As a penniless teenager he entered the state afoot in about 1842, a fugitive from his hard-pressed Missouri family, who punished him for a bloody assault on his brother. He came in search of an uncle, John Wesley Thompson, who had moved to Mississippi in the 1830s after being acquitted of murder by a Georgia court. By the time of young Falkner's arrival on his doorstep in the town of Ripley, Thompson had made a good start in politics and law, and was able to help William begin his rapid rise. As a volunteer in the Mexican War, William suffered wounds in a hand and a foot (inflicted to avenge alleged insult to a woman). He then returned home, entered the bar, married a young woman who inherited slaves, bought land and appeared to be destined for a planter's life.

In 1849, however, his luck changed. In a fight he stabbed and killed a son of the wealthy Hindman family and was acquitted of murder. Two years later he shot and killed a friend of the Hindmans, and was again acquitted: two murders before he was 25. A pistol duel between Falkner and the brother of the Hindman he had killed was arranged and narrowly averted. The feud continued, but by 1860 he was a prosperous businessman, "not the richest man" in the county, "but he was well off." When war came, he was elected colonel of a regiment that acquitted itself well at Manassas. But embittered by failing to be re-elected and by failing to gain a brigadier's commission, the Colonel "disappeared from view for almost two years," during which he seems to have been smuggling cotton across war borders in profitable if quite illegal and dangerous exchange for Yankee products.

With only a few slaves to emancipate and no plantation to lose, he emerged from the war and remained through Reconstruction one of the richest men in his county. One of his numerous business enterprises was a railroad to connect the Gulf with the Great Lakes by a short route—a dream of empire in the robber baron style. For his labor force, instead of Chinese coolies he leased state convicts at $50 each per year and secured

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land and largess from the state legislature, with the help of Congress and President Cleveland. In the meantime he wrote a melodramatic novel called *The White Rose of Memphis* (1881) that sold 160,000 copies and might be reckoned among his business ventures.

After quarreling with his long-term partner Richard Thurmond, the Colonel bought his share of investment in the road and became its sole owner. But this feud continued for years, with exchanges of insults and court actions, and ended with Thurmond shooting Falkner down on a street in Ripley on November 5, 1889. He died the next day. Thurmond was acquitted of the murder, "not so much by the brilliance of his lawyer," says Williamson, as because Falkner had over the years thoroughly "alienated himself from his community by his independence, his willfulness and his egoism." It had been a veritable career of alienation in which "the people closest to him were the very people who cast him out," starting with his parents in Missouri. Anticipating his end, he had commissioned a larger-than-life statue of himself—made by an Italian sculptor in Carrara marble—and had it placed atop a fourteen-foot pedestal, a monument that still marks his grave.

WILLIAM FAULKNER BY JACK COUGHLIN FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Struck by the "almost total neglect" of the novelist's forebears on his mother's side, the Butlers, Williamson brings much new light to bear on the creation of the Yoknapatawpha legend. Like the Falkners, the Butlers were townsmen, hotel owners and businessmen—not planters, but well off. For a sample of the Butler breed to match Colonel Falkner, we may turn to William Faulkner's maternal grandfather, Charles E. Butler, who became head of the Butler clan as a youth. He was elected marshal of the Town of Oxford in 1876, an office that included the duties of collecting taxes and paying public debts. As a police officer he shot and killed Sam Thompson, the editor of a local newspaper, while attempting to arrest him in 1883. Thompson was known as a drunk and scofflaw, and he was drunk while resisting arrest. Butler was re-elected town marshal before his trial, at which the jury found him not guilty.

For the next five years or so, life for the Butlers appeared to go smoothly on the surface. He and his artistic wife, Lelia, had two attractive teenage children born quite early in the marriage. Charlie earned a good living and was well established in the community, probably due in part to the high reputation of his father, the county's first sheriff, who had surveyed and laid out the town of Oxford. If he had vices of drink or enjoyed riotous living, there was no record of it, or any evidence of insolvency or neglect of official duties. He had been unanimously re-elected by the aldermen in 1886, and had about completed the collection of town taxes for 1887 around Christmas when he mysteriously and completely disappeared. Investigation by the aldermen in February 1888 concluded that Charlie had absconded with "a shockingly large amount of town money," deserted his wife and children and left his bondsmen responsible for missing funds. He never returned.

Williamson offers an explanation for Butler's disappearance; it introduces an important racial theme of his book, a theme that also enters significantly into his interpretation of Colonel Falkner, who met his violent end only two years after Butler absconded. As a historian of the South, Williamson has made race and racial mixing central to his interest. It seems likely that the prominence of these themes in Faulkner's work played a part in drawing him into a study of the author. He points out that "race was central, integral and vital in the three great novels of the earlier phase of his work"—*The Sound and the Fury* (1929), *Light in August* (1932) and *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936). He adds that in the later novels, *Go Down Moses* (1942), *Intruder in the Dust* (1948) and *Requiem for a Nun* (1951), race questions figure even more pointedly and powerfully.

Neither Colonel Falkner nor Charles Butler could get along with his wife. The Colonel's wife eventually moved to Memphis and stayed. Her husband was known to have a "shadow family," Emeline Falkner and three children, all born slaves and children of former owners, all very "white." Falkner bought them in 1858, and Emeline later bore him a daughter he named Fannie Forrest Falkner. To this daughter Falkner remained strongly attached. He sent Fannie to Rust College, a Mississippi school for blacks, where he visited her and brought her flowers, and where immediately after her graduation in 1888 she married the man who later became president of the college. Before the college years, however, Emeline and Fannie had made an astonishing if temporary change of residence, and were listed in the 1880 census as "Servant" and "House Maid," respectively, in the household of Richard Thurmond, the man who was to shoot and kill Falkner in November 1889. Emeline and her first two daughters are buried a few yards from the towering statue of the Colonel in the Ripley cemetery. So much for great-grandfather Falkner.

About grandfather Butler, the evidence regarding marital, extramarital and interracial history is much more circumstantial, but it is regarded by Williamson as "fairly strong." Tradition had it that Charlie not only went

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bankrupt, but that he ran away with a "beautiful octoroon." We are given reason to discard the "bankrupt" theory of his defection, but we are clearly expected to take more seriously the "beautiful octoroon." She is described without further explanation as the "companion" of the wife of Jacob Thompson of Oxford, "model of the cotton frontier aristocrat," a wealthy planter and personal friend of President Buchanan as well as a member of his Cabinet. History, census data, family tradition, interviews, legend, rumor and hearsay are pressed into service in support of the octoroon theory, usually hedged about with qualifying "ifs." But in a section titled "Maybe," thus begging license for speculation, caution is all but abandoned. In a single paragraph there appear two "chances are," one "it might be" and one "he might," not to mention a "possibly," a "perhaps" and a "probably," all of this leading up to an elaboration of the octoroon theory that made "it seem likely that the couple had children"—slightly off-color half-brothers and half-sisters of Muriel, mother of the novelist, thus making "the ensuing generation" cousins of his.

It is enough to bring half the academic historians to their feet with cries of indignation. As a member of the guild, I understand their protest. As a reader of Faulkner, however, I beg an exception to the rules, and a generous effort to understand what our colleague is about. He writes in one place that "this is not the world that William Faulkner created; it is, rather, the world that created William Faulkner." Yet he also knows that before Billy Falkner became William Faulkner, and even after that, he lived with family tradition and community gossip that filled in gaps or left awkward subjects to the imagination, out of which he created both his "real" and his fictional world. Even if much of it was rumor, it was formative material for the novelist.

After Faulkner's parents moved to Oxford when he was 5, memories of absconding grandfather Butler were still alive in that community and "his absence amounted almost to a perpetual—and painful—presence in the household in which William Faulkner grew up." That same household, however, provided him with a devoted mother and a supportive father. Courthouse Square in Oxford was the stage for much family drama—site of the old Butler Hotel and near the spot where grandfather Butler shot Sam Thompson to death. Community feelings against a miscreant grandfather in Oxford recalled to Billy the bitterness against a great-grandfather in Ripley, where he had seen people cross the street to avoid speaking to his parents. Whether the truly historical world or the writer's fictional world was the stranger and the more incredible was often a toss-up. From the tension between the two and the pressure of being "always an outsider observing critically the social universe to which he was born" sprang "the power of the artist" and, according to Williamson, "both sustenance and pain."

Family legend and history did not end with great-grandfathers or grandfathers, but continued with repetition of early themes, including violence, down to events within the novelist's time. His own father, Murry Falkner, after winning a fight over a woman in his youth, was shot in the back the next day by his rival, who then turned him over and shot him in the mouth. He somehow survived. Many years later a small grandson asked him why he slipped a pistol into his pocket before taking the boy to see a circus. The reply was he "might see that fellow."

Faulkner's huge cast of fictional characters was by no means limited to those resembling relatives or ancestors or their slaves, but those who do suggest such origins cover a wide variety of classes and types. His own Uncle John was said by a cousin to be as "crooked as a barrel of snakes," and by Williamson to be "more than a match for any ambitious redneck—any 'Snopes.'" The Snopes trilogy—*The Hamlet* (1940), *The Town* (1957) and *The Mansion* (1959)—could not have been set, of course, anywhere but in Yoknapatawpha County, but we are rightly warned against assuming that they, or any of Faulkner's novels, were written to depict or to characterize the South or its people. He just happened to know the South well enough to write about it, he explained to Cowley, but "man stinks the same stink no matter where in time"—or in place, he could have added. What was often taken as an apology for the South was really an indictment not only of the South, but of America.

His own time, however, coincided with the crest of radical racist hysteria in the South, and it left its mark on the man and his work. He could slip into a rhetorical slur against blacks, but he was no bigot and hated bigotry. Nor could he be called a liberal. Yet in his major novels from 1932 to *Go Down, Moses* in 1942 he anticipated the revolt against racism by his scorn of stereotypes, and by the moral stature and individuality he accorded to his black characters. In 1943 he called on Americans to "make good the shibboleths they glibly talk about freedom, liberty, human rights" and predicted that "change will come out of this war." His *Intruder in the Dust* (1948), addressing race relations, was his most popular novel, but not among his best. Nor was *A Fable* (1954), which confronted war as a public issue. In his new persona as savant, pundit and reformer, Faulkner proved even more inept than he was in air combat and horsemanship. After the *Brown* decision against school segregation in 1954 he increasingly exposed himself in the press with contradictory, confused and ultimately reactionary positions on

Where the Stars Disintegrate,

where a gull swallows a silent piece of sky or
a red kite conversing with a cloud fades away

to nothing was formerly called heaven. Now it is
named light, morning or dark, night or any of the

variations like the black and white words shrinking
on the optometrist's chart that become whole and

incomprehensible under the right glass. How I wanted
to see the twists and turns in the celestial necklace

that people have viewed for centuries. To be able
to watch Orion take aim at me from the throat

of the universe. Sand heated to the correct thickness
allows me to see the sign screaming its warning,

the blond woman painted near the nose of a distant plane,
the subtitles of foreign movies where a large moon makes

sentences disappear. This morning I can name
the constellations like friends whose faults become apparent

as they are walking out your door and
as they say goodbye they are calling you someone else.

LAURIE BLAUNER

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race that provoked ridicule, embarrassed his friends and plunged him into cycles of heavy drinking that landed him in the hospital vomiting blood.

A personal life so crowded with contradiction and paradox, and a body of writings so cryptic and enigmatic, make it all but impossible to venture a generalization about either the man or his work without risk of challenge by authorities. And venturing any theory about the relation of the man to his work runs equal risks. Undaunted, if uneasily aware of the hazards involved, Williamson has nevertheless undertaken these tasks; and I turn to Cleanth Brooks, a great authority on Faulkner, for the best justification I know of Williamson's linkage of Faulkner with Southern history. Any reader of the novels who expects enlightenment about history in the usual sense will be disappointed. Faulkner himself read little history, and deeply though his works were enmeshed in the past, they could not be called "historical novels." According to Brooks, Faulkner viewed "the past as a living force in the present, a force that molds our sense of the present," and also held that "time does not exist apart from the consciousness of some human being." Faulkner could say in an interview that "there is only the present moment, in which I include both the past and the future." Later, in referring to "my own theory that time is a fluid condition," he would add, "There is no such thing as *was*—only *is*."

More than once Faulkner would mention Henri Bergson in support of his theory about the fluidity of time and the presence of the past in the present. But then he would later throw in Flaubert, Balzac and Proust for good measure. In the opinion of Brooks, Faulkner never read Bergson very deeply, but merely found in him "confirmation, from a respected philosopher, of something that he already knew," an assumption on which he had proceeded from the start, "that to isolate the past from the present was to falsify the very nature of time." The folk culture in which he grew up, and which he wrote about, had a powerful sense of the past, not history from books but, as Brooks puts it, "absorbed through a process of cultural osmosis." As Faulkner himself described his sources of Southern history, "I was just saturated with it, but never read about it."

This does not imply either disparagement, justification of the present or nostalgia for past glory; and it certainly carries no implication of "progress." There were those who used history to fabricate such myths, but William Faulkner was not one of them. •

You deserve a factual look at...

Israel's "Right to Exist"

Is it important that the Arabs acknowledge it?

In the on-again/off again Mid-East Peace Conference, the Arabs, insist that meetings take place in Madrid, in Washington or some other locale far from the area of conflict. The Israelis wanted to convene in the respective capitals of the involved parties. It seemed like a reasonable suggestion. After all, Jerusalem is only 150 miles from Damascus, Syria, and only 80 miles from Amman, Jordan. But the Arabs did not accept that suggestion and insisted on a site as far away from home as possible. Why would they wish to impose such inconvenience on themselves? They believed that meeting with Israel in their respective capitals might by inference be considered as their recognition of Israel's existence.

What are the facts?

A Denial of Reality: Despite decisive military defeats in the wars that they have launched against the Jewish state, the Arabs deny the existence of the country that has inflicted such severe and repeated punishment on them. When it becomes inevitable to mention the Jewish state at all it is insolently referred to only as "the Zionist entity". This non-acknowledgement of Israel's existence is not simply a matter of semantics. Arab maps do not show Israel, but a vast area labeled as "Palestine". Cities such as Tel Aviv and Haifa simply don't exist. Arab school children have no "official" knowledge of the existence of Israel. Schedules of foreign airlines that show Israel on their route maps or that list Israeli destinations are not allowed in most Arab countries. Foreign publications print special editions for the Arab countries, since no publication carrying advertising of Israeli firms may appear in those countries. And, of course, tourists of any nationality may not enter most Arab countries if their passports show evidence that the holders have ever visited Israel, the "non-existent country".

Israel Exists because it Exists: As an inducement to Israel for yielding lands that are absolutely indispensable for the country's defense, the "West Bank" and the Golan Heights, the Arabs now and then offer the possibility of the "recognition" of Israel's existence. The sad and almost incomprehensible aspect of that is that many well-meaning people in the U.S.,and in other countries believe that this might be an acceptable bargain for Israel. But it's a self-defeating exercise. Israel's existence is in no way dependent on the recognition of any Arab state. It's simple: Israel exists because it exists. Therefore, suppose that meaningful meetings came about between Israel and an Arab country, and suppose that an Arab diplomat would ask what Israel would be prepared to "give" if that Arab country would consider acknowledging Israel's existence. Israel should reply that it in turn would consider acknowledging that Arab country's existence. Or, Israel could declare a boycott of the Arab world and could offer to relax or to rescind such boycott in consideration of parallel gestures by that Arab country.

> "Israel's existence is in no way dependent on the recognition of any Arab state. It's simple: Israel exists because it exists."

The bizarre concept of Israel's "non-existence" has been around for over forty years. Many have been led to believe that Israel should bring substantial sacrifices, so as to get the Arabs to acknowledge Israel's existence. It is often said that Israel needs to be "recognized" by the Arabs in order to "normalize her condition". But need not the Arabs, too, live in "normalized conditions"? And Israel is often promised that, in return for yielding vital strategic territory to the Arabs, she would be assured of "safe and secure borders". But don't the Arabs also need borders that are safe and secure? The Arab countries have come to believe that peace is only good and desirable for Israel. But it is surely at least as important for the Arabs, who have lived through five wars with Israel—the "non-existent country". Peace and prosperity can and will come to this troubled region only when the Arabs accept the reality of Israel's existence and negotiate with her in good faith.

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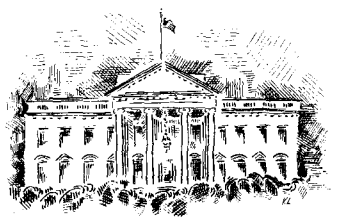
WASHINGTON DIARIST

Dummy copy

THE POLITICS OF MEANING ARE finally making even Michael Lerner, the father of the creed, squirm a little. While he was abstractly communing with Hillary Clinton about "ethical and spiritual sensitivity," etc., and she was vaguely mulling over ways to bring the message to the people ("How do we just break this whole enterprise down into small enough pieces? Well, somebody says to themselves: 'You know, I'm not going to tell that racist, sexist joke.... Maybe I should try to restrain myself ...'"), concrete action was under way at *Tikkun*, Lerner's own magazine. Marge Piercy, the poetry editor, was putting POM into practice on her own. She accepted a poem, or rather what she considered the non-sexist parts of a poem, by a writer named Gershom Gorenberg. Notifying him by letter, she didn't hesitate to explain her decision to restrain him: "I have to say I am not fond of the way you write about women, but I have left out those parts. When I blot out those parts, I like what you are doing." He rebelled, and the quarrel found its way to the op-ed page of *The New York Times*, where Gorenberg had his say, calling Piercy's excisions presumptuous—and perplexing: What was wrong with his "mystic's vision of entering a 'woman whose skin shone / like the moon'"? And Piercy had her say, countering that she was merely selecting, not editing. And Lerner, in a third piece, was called upon to adjudicate. (So much for the cynical media that he likes to denounce: it has become a sharing and caring venue for his every utterance.) Lerner boldly opposed publishing offensive art of poor quality, "but when an artist consciously knows what he or she is doing and does it well (think of some sadomasochistic art), I would disagree with my poetry editor ..." I guess if you want to praise the glow of a woman's skin in *Tikkun*, you'd better be ready to tie her up in the second stanza.

THE NEW REPUBLIC ITSELF, I should confess, can't claim an immaculate record of defending poetic freedom of expression. Instead of blotting words out, we've been known to tack words on. Several years ago, thanks to a mysterious glitch that occurred as the magazine was going to press, an extra last line materialized in a poem (an utterly inoffensive work, as it happened): "This is dummy copy," it announced. How's that for a sly censorship technique? Too sly, as it turned out: no one except the poet himself noticed that we'd forced him to eat his words.

FOR A BRACING ANTIDOTE TO Michael Lerner and his spiritual sensitivity, you can count on Katha Pollitt, an associate editor at *The Nation*, who is a sharp-thinking cultural materialist and a vigorous essayist (when she's not being a gifted literary critic and poet). Spare us all the ethical blather, is her line: what counts is economics. Judge Ginsburg rightly heaped praise on her essay of half a year ago demolishing the reigning wisdom of the so-called difference feminists, who champion the view that women are morally superior to men. Sure, the sexes are different, Pollitt argued, but not radically different, and not because of "essential, universal features of male and female psychosexual development [but because of] the economic and social positions men and women hold." In her most recent sally against cultural sermonizing (another *Times* op-ed page event), she heralded the rising rate of motherhood among unmarried white, college-educated and professional women as an inevitable and economically rational development. The piece is a typical rhetorical tour de force, but I was surprised at where it seemed to lead: away from the equality feminism that I count on her to defend. By the end of the article she'd gone beyond arguing that, with working women no longer economically dependent on husbands, more of them will embark on solo motherhood. "There isn't any way, in our modern, secular society, to reconnect marriage and maternity," she concluded, so let's welcome the spread of single mothers and unattached men (who can make their own dinner for a change). But if women set up alone as capable childbearers, and men set off alone, selfish and unreliable, aren't we looking at a world of stark difference? I'm still with the Pollitt who in her *Nation* essay hailed the arrival of "the moment when the lives of the sexes are becoming less distinct than they have ever been in the West."



"AS YOU KNOW, ALL PUBLICATIONS today want to avoid sexism, racism and ageism in illustrations as well as in text," says a memo sent to free-lance illustrators by the American Library Association's monthly magazine, *American Libraries*. The guidelines for the artists are full of boilerplate about portraying ethnic diversity, but they also mention some more specialized requirements: "Librarians should never be depicted as spinsters or 'little old ladies.' Male librarians do not ordinarily wear bow ties. Exaggerated breasts and buttocks, shushing fingers, and SILENCE signs are unacceptable in *American Libraries*." To judge by what happened at this year's American Booksellers Association convention in Miami Beach, the expunging of the old stereotypes is long overdue. One publisher who had arranged a dinner for a group of librarians was in for a shock as he led his guests into the appointed restaurant: since he'd made the reservation, the place had undergone an X-rated renovation, with waiters in G-strings at every table. The staff obligingly covered up, but there was nothing to be done about the exaggerated genitalia pictured on the walls. The librarians reportedly didn't bat an eye at the decor, and not because they were too stooped and nearsighted to notice. "Oh, don't worry, we can handle that," one woman reassured her host, gesturing up at an enormous male member. Plainly things have been changing in the stacks. But I'm still trying to figure out what is so outdated and offensive about a SILENCE sign.

THE CHRISTIAN ACTION NETwork, battling to defund the National Endowment for the Arts, tried to scandalize Congress recently with a photography show featuring especially outré federally financed work. No sooner was the exhibit set up in the Capitol than it was ordered off the premises, so neither I nor anyone else had much time to consider the aesthetic merits of "Testicle Stretch With the Possibility of a Crushed Face" by Joel-Peter Witkin, one bête noire of the little display. But I don't need to. Without looking at his pictures, I know he represents one very simple NEA problem in need of fixing: according to *The Washington Post*, Witkin (whose work sells for plenty) has gotten *four* grants from the visual arts fellowship program ($20,000 last year). With arts policies like that, the culture of dependency takes on new meaning.

ANN HULBERT

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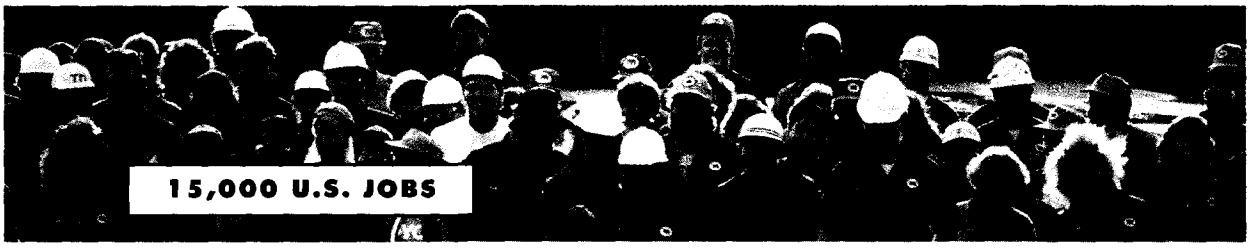
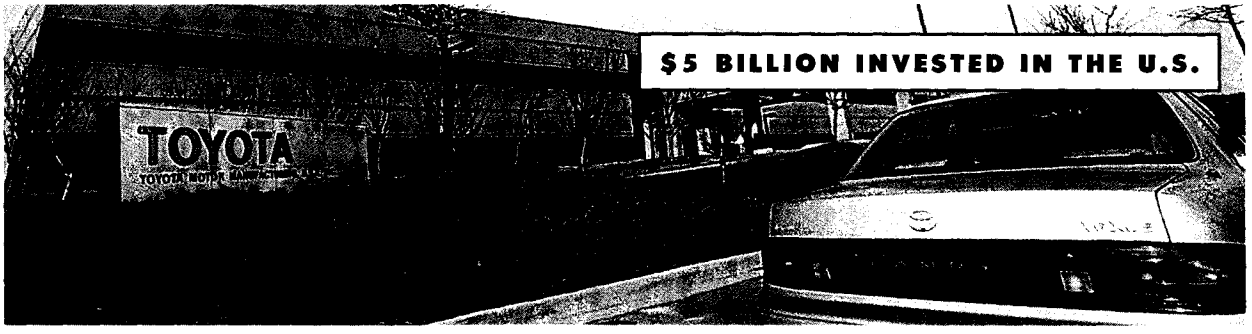


ECONOMY



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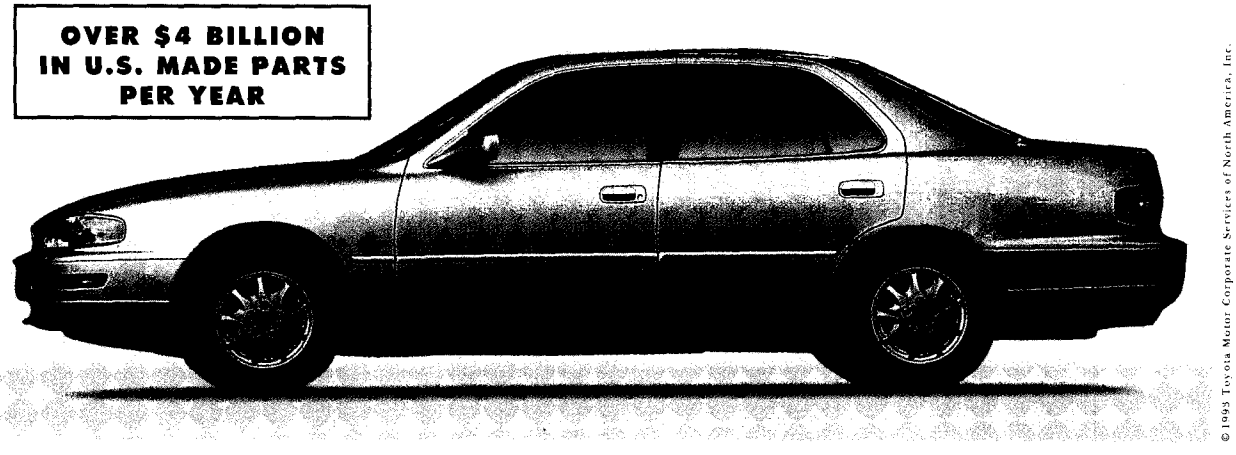

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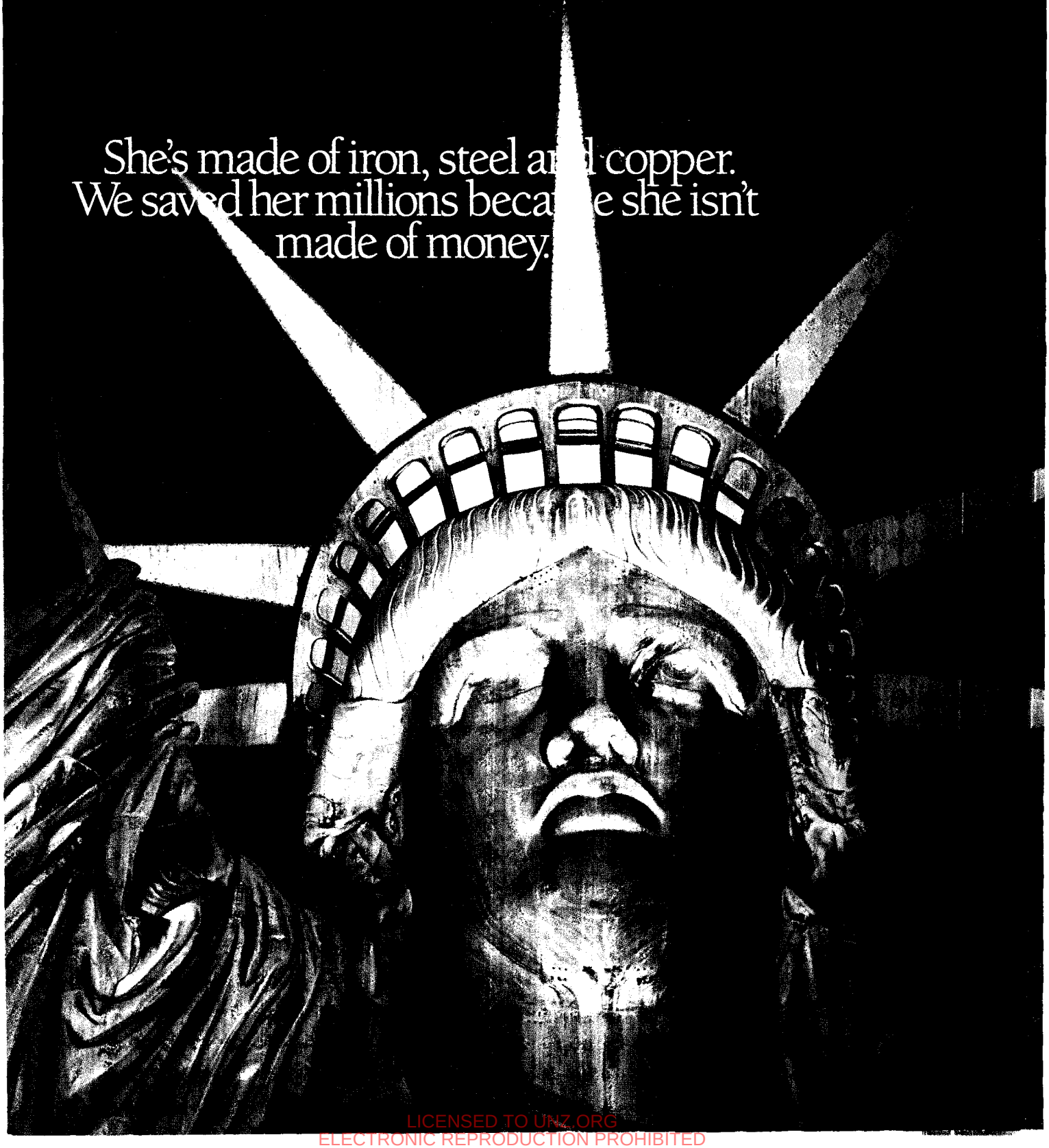

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